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WILLIAM ALNWICK,
BISHOP OF NORWICH (1426-1437) AND LINCOLN (1437-1449)

Rosemary Clare Elizabeth Hayes

A thesis submitted to the University of Bristol
in accordance with the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts

School of History

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ABSTRACT

WILLIAM ALNWICK,

BISHOP OF NORWICH (1426-1437) AND LINCOLN (1437-1449)

William Alnwick's two episcopates have left an unusually rich legacy of sources which have, perhaps, been responsible for his relatively favourable reputation among historians. Chapter I places his career in context by discussing the general reputation of fifteenth-century bishops. There follow an examination of the surviving records of Alnwick's episcopates and their use by historians, and a brief consideration of his pre-episcopal career.

Chapters II to V examine Alnwick as a diocesan. In chapter II, the conflicts arising from his attempts to settle disputes within the Lincoln cathedral chapter are compared with the more peaceful atmosphere at Norwich and evidence of co-operation between bishop and both chapters in everyday administration. Chapter III discusses the time Alnwick spent in his dioceses, his administrative agents and his activity as a patron. An attempt to discover the impact of his episcopates on those subject to his ordinary jurisdiction is made in chapter IV. This investigates the dispensations and licences he granted as well as the practice of his courts of audience in instance and disciplinary cases. Reference is made, but not at length, to the much-discussed Norwich heresy proceedings of 1428-31. In chapter V, Alnwick's disputes with the abbots of Bury St Edmunds and St Albans are contrasted with his day-to-day contact with other religious and collegiate foundations, including, but not relating in detail, his visitations.

William Alnwick's royal service, including his ten years as keeper of the privy seal (1422-32), is discussed in chapter VI, where he is identified as a probable supporter of Cardinal Beaufort. The chapter concludes with a sketch of his relations with his peers and superiors in the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

Alnwick emerges as a man who employed until death the considerable abilities that had assisted his rise from obscure origins, providing conscientious service to both church and crown.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The research for this thesis was begun under the supervision of Professor Charles Ross. He introduced me to the study of the fifteenth century, encouraged me to believe that I had some capacity for it, and suggested that I should tackle the career of William Alnwick. I am immensely sad that he did not live to see its completion. That the thesis was not abandoned after his death was largely due to the encouragement of Miss Margaret Condon and Professor William Doyle. Thanks to the latter, the work has been completed under the supervision of Professor Barrie Dobson. In this I have been extremely fortunate. The assistance and encouragement he has given me with the thesis have only been surpassed by his hospitality, first in York and latterly in Cambridge.

I am particularly grateful to Dr David Smith, Dr Tony Antonovics and Dr Antonia Gransden for reading and commenting on earlier drafts of chapters III, IV and V, respectively. I must also thank Dr Caroline Barron, Mrs Julia Carnwath, Dr Dorothy Owen and Miss Anne Sutton for pointing out several useful sources of information.

I have received much assistance from the staff of the following record offices and libraries: Bedfordshire Record Office; the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research; the British Library; Cambridge University Library, Corpus Christi College and Emmanuel College Libraries, Cambridge; the Guildhall Library; the Institute of Historical Research; Kent Archives Office; Lambeth Palace Library; Lincolnshire Archives Office; Norfolk Record Office; the Public Record Office; and Wiltshire Record Office. Special thanks are due to Mr Nicholas Bennett of Lincolnshire Archives Office and Miss Susan Maddock of Norfolk Record Office.

My work in Norwich, Lincoln and Cambridge was much assisted by the hospitality of Miss Yvonne Crofton-Sleigh, my cousins Mr and Mrs Peter Vergette, and Mr and Mrs Colin Clarkson. Recently, my parents' move to Lincolnshire has provided me with rather more than a convenient base. I must also thank my colleagues in the Wellcome Foundation and Institute for their patience during the period when I was torn between nineteenth-century pharmaceuticals and the fifteenth-century church. My work on William Alnwick's registers would never have been completed without the kindness of Dr Richard Palmer of the WIHM, who lent me his microfilm reader for over a year. I am very grateful for the help and encouragement of many other people, and would particularly like to mention Fr David Ardagh-Walter, Miss Elizabeth Danbury, Dr Virginia Davis, Dr Diana Greenway, Mrs Madeleine Hoare, Dr Michael Jones, Dr Carole Rawcliffe and Miss Elizabeth Ward.

Finally, and most especially, I must thank my husband, Andrew Milligan. He has supported me financially, run our household, typed the thesis, and developed a hearty dislike for William Alnwick. Without his help, support and encouragement the completion of this thesis would have been impossible.

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis, and the research upon which it is based, are my own independent work. Where I have benefited from the work or assistance of others, this has been clearly stated.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Rosemary Clare Hayes". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the printed name.

ROSEMARY CLARE ELIZABETH HAYES

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ABBREVIATIONS

Amundesham	<i>Annales Monasterii S. Albani, A Johanne Amundesham, Monacho, ut videtur, Conscripti, (A.D. 1421-1440). Quibus Praefigitur Chronicon Rerum Gestarum in Monasterio S. Albani (A.D. 1422-1431) A Quodam Auctore Ignote Compilatum, ed. H.T. Riley, RS no. 28, part V, 2 vols (1870-1)</i>
Bekynton Correspondence	<i>Memorials of the Reign of King Henry VI. Official Correspondence of Thomas Bekynton, Secretary to King Henry VI, and Bishop of Bath and Wells, ed. G. Williams, RS no. 56, 2 vols (1872)</i>
BIHR	<i>Bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research</i>
BJRL	<i>Bulletin of the John Rylands Library</i>
Blomefield	<i>F. Blomefield (and C. Parkin), An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk, 11 vols (2nd edn, 1805-10)</i>
BL	The British Library
BRUC	<i>A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Cambridge to 1500 (Cambridge, 1963)</i>
BRUO	<i>A.B. Emden, A Biographical Register of the University of Oxford to A.D. 1500, 3 vols (Oxford, 1957-9)</i>
Burnham,	<i>B. Burnham, 'The Episcopal Administration of the Diocese of Norwich in the Later Middle Ages', unpublished Oxford University B.Litt., (1971)</i>
Canterbury Admin.	<i>I.J. Churchill, Canterbury Administration: The Administrative Machinery of the Archbishopric of Canterbury Illustrated from Original Records, 2 vols (1933)</i>
CCR	<i>Calendar of the Close Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office (1272-1509), 47 vols, (1892-1963)</i>
CFR	<i>Calendar of the Fine Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office (1272-1509), 22 vols (1911-63)</i>
Court book	LAO: Lincoln episcopal records: Cj 0: Court book of Bishop Alnwick's court of audience

CPL	<i>Calendar of Entries in the Papal Registers Relating to Great Britain and Ireland: Papal Letters (1198-1492)</i> , ed. W.H. Bliss and J.A. Twemlow, 14 vols (1894-1961)
CPR	<i>Calendar of the Patent Rolls Preserved in the Public Record Office, (1232-1509)</i> , 52 vols (1891-1916)
CUL	Cambridge University Library
Davies, Ph.D.	R.G. Davies, 'The Episcopate in England and Wales, 1375-1443', unpublished Manchester University Ph.D. (1974)
DNB	<i>Dictionary of National Biography</i>
EETS	Early English Texts Society
EHR	<i>English Historical Review</i>
Eng. Clergy	A. Hamilton Thompson, <i>The English Clergy and their Organization in the Later Middle Ages</i> (Oxford, 1947)
Fasti	<i>Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1300-1541</i> , a new edition published by the Institute of Historical Research, 12 vols (1962-7), Volumes
I:	<i>The Lincoln Diocese</i> , ed. H.P.F. King (1962)
IV:	<i>Monastic Cathedrals (Southern Province)</i> , ed. B. Jones (1963)
XII:	<i>Introduction, Errata and Index</i> , ed. J.M. Horn (1967)
Foedera	<i>Foedera, Conventiones, Litterae, et Cujuscunque Generis Acta Publica, Inter Reges Angliae, et Alios Quosvis Imperatores, Reges, Pontifices, Principes, vel Communitates, ab Ineunte Saeculo Duodecimo, Viz ab Anno 1101 ad Nostra Usque Tempore, Habita aut Tractata</i> , ed. T. Rymer, 10 vols (The Hague, 1739-45)
Foxe	<i>The Acts and Monuments of John Foxe: A New and Complete Edition: with a Preliminary Dissertation by the Rev. George Townsend</i> , ed. S.R. Cattley, 8 vols (1837-41)
FZ	<i>Fasciculi Zizaniorum Johannis Wyclif Cum Tricito</i> , ed. W.W. Shirley, RS no. 5 (1858)
HBC	E. B. Fryde, D.E. Greenway, S. Porter, I. Roy (eds), <i>Handbook of British Chronology</i> , (3rd edn, 1986)
HBD	C.R. Cheney (ed.), <i>Handbook of Dates for Students of English History</i> (3rd edn, 1981)

HMC	Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts
JEH	<i>Journal of Ecclesiastical History</i>
LAO	Lincolnshire Archives Office
<i>Laudum</i>	<i>The Award of William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, A.D. 1439</i> , ed. C. Wordsworth and trans. R.M. Woolley (Cambridge, 1913)
LCS	<i>Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral</i> , ed. H. Bradshaw and C. Wordsworth, 2 parts in 3 vols (Cambridge, 1892-7)
Linc. Reg.	LAO: Lincoln episcopal records: Register XVIII: William Alnwick's episcopal register, 1436-1449
<i>Loci e Libro</i>	<i>Loci e Libro Veritatum: Passages Selected From Gascoigne's Theological Dictionary illustrating the Condition of Church and State, 1403-58</i> , ed. J.E. Thorold Rogers (Oxford, 1881)
LPL	Lambeth Palace Library
<i>Monasticon</i>	<i>Monasticon Anglicanum: A History of the Abbies and other Monasteries, Hospitals, and Cathedral and Collegiate Churches, with their Dependencies, in England and Wales. Originally published in Latin by Sir William Dugdale</i> , ed. J. Caley, H. Ellis and B. Bandinel, 6 vols in 8 (1817-30)
Norw. Reg.	NRO: Norwich episcopal records: REG 5/9: William Alnwick's episcopal register, 1426-1437
NRO	Norfolk Record Office
OHS	Oxford Historical Society
PPC	<i>Proceedings and Ordinances of the Privy Council of England (1386-1542)</i> , ed. N.H. Nicolas, 7 vols (Record Commission, 1834-7)
<i>Provinciale</i>	<i>Provinciale Seu Constitutiones Angliae</i> , W. Lyndwood (Oxford, 1679)
<i>Reg. Chich.</i>	<i>Register of Henry Chichele, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1414-1443</i> , ed. E.F. Jacob, 4 vols, Canterbury and York Society, vols XLII, XLV-XLVII (1937-1947)
RP	<i>Rotuli Parliamentorum; ut et Petitiones, et Placita in Parlamento</i> , 6 vols (1783)
RS	<i>Rerum Britannicarum Medii Aevi Scriptores or Chronicles and Memorials of Great Britain and Ireland during the Middle Ages</i> (Rolls Series)

TRHS	<i>Transactions of the Royal Historical Society</i>
<i>Trials</i>	<i>Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428-1431</i> , ed. N.P. Tanner, Camden Society, 4th series, vol. XX (1977)
VCH Norfolk	<i>The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Norfolk</i> , [and likewise for other counties]
VE	<i>Valor Ecclesiasticus, temp. Henrici VIII, auctoritate regia institutus</i> , ed. J. Caley, 6 vols (Record Commission, 1810-1834)
<i>Visitations I</i>	<i>Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln</i> , vol. I, <i>Injunctions and other Documents from the Registers of Richard Flemyng and William Gray, Bishops of Lincoln A.D. MCCCCXX-MCCCCXXXVI</i> , ed. A. Hamilton Thompson, Canterbury and York Society, vol. XVII (1915)
<i>Visitations II</i>	<i>Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln</i> , vols II-III, <i>Records of Visitations held by William Alnwick A.D. MCCCCXXXVI-MCCCCXLIX</i> , ed. A. Hamilton Thompson, Canterbury and York Society, vols XXIV, XXXIII (1919, 1927)

I. WILLIAM ALNWICK: AN INTRODUCTION TO A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY BISHOP

'Taken as a whole, the English bishops of the fifteenth century were not a strong body of men'.¹ For nearly five hundred years, the episcopate of Lancastrian England has suffered from the condemnation of its members by Thomas Gascoigne, the disappointed chancellor of Oxford university: '*quia vitam bonam exemplarem non ostendunt, nec doctrinam populo praebent, sed pecunias colligunt, et in suis ecclesiis nec resident, nec hospitalitatem tenent*'.² Nineteenth-century historians considered it was 'the very worst probably of all periods of the English church for the character of the bishops',³ relieved only by such characters as they found attractive. Even in recent years, an expert on the fourteenth-century episcopate⁴ has suggested that the scarcity of full-scale biographies of the fifteenth-century archbishops of Canterbury is an indication of their lack of eminence.⁵ To the historian of the Lancastrian period, aware of the influence in both ecclesiastical

-
1. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 44-5.
 2. *Loci e Libro*, p 43.
 3. G.G. Perry, 'Bishop Beckington and King Henry VI', pp 261-74 in *EHR*, vol. IX (1894), p 271.
 4. R.M Haines, author of *The Administration of the Diocese of Worcester in the First Half of the Fourteenth Century* (1965); *The Church and Politics in Fourteenth-century England: the Career of Adam Orleton c.1275-1345* (Cambridge, 1978); *Archbishop John Stratford* (Toronto, 1986). He has also written on the fifteenth century: 'Aspects of the Episcopate of John Carpenter, Bishop of Worcester, 1444-1476', *JEH*, vol. XIX (1968), pp 11-40; 'The Practice and Problems of a Fifteenth-century English Bishop: The Episcopate of William Gray', *Medieval Studies*, vol. XXXIV (1972), pp 435-61.
 5. 'Conflict in Government: Archbishops versus Kings, 1279-1348', pp 213-45, in *Aspects of Late Medieval Government and Society. Essays Presented to J.R. Lander*, ed. J.G. Rowe (Toronto, 1986), p 214. His rather dismissive description of E.F. Jacob's *Archbishop Henry Chichele* (1967) as an '*opus pietatis* by a long-time fellow of All Souls' College, Chichele's foundation, who was also responsible for an edition of the archbishop's massive Canterbury register' hardly does justice to Jacob's contribution to the study of the subject, and the magisterial nature of his edition of Chichele's register (*Reg. Chich.*). A work which perhaps deserves such description is A.F. Judd, *The Life of Thomas Bekynton, Secretary to King Henry VI and Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1443-1465* (Chichester, 1961), where much stress is laid upon the benign influence of Winchester College.

and political affairs of Archbishops Arundel, Chichele, Stafford and Kemp, such statements ring in a decidedly hollow fashion. All four have been the subject of studies of varying depth and importance.¹ Even John Kemp has, surely, finally been rescued from the mechanical reiteration of Gascoigne's eminently quotable statement that '*per xxviij fere annos in quibus stetit archiepiscopus Eboracensis fuit totaliter absens a sua diocesi, ..., excepto quod aliquando semel in decem vel in duodecim annis mansit in sua diocesi Eboracensi per duas vel tres septimanas, paucis diebus vel nullis mansit in Eboraco*'.²

The re-assessment of the Lancastrian episcopate, largely made possible by the pioneering work in the study of episcopal documents of A. Hamilton Thompson during the early part of this century,³ has progressed in piecemeal fashion as more and more individual bishops have been studied. The publishers of episcopal registers⁴ and

-
1. On Arundel, see M.E. Aston, *Thomas Arundel, A Study of Church Life in the Reign of Richard II* (Oxford, 1967). Jacob's major work on Chichele is cited above. It was he who illuminated some important aspects of the career of John Stafford (who still awaits a major study) in 'Archbishop John Stafford', *Essays in Later Medieval History* (Manchester, 1968), pp 35-57. See also J.A. Nigota, 'John Kempe, A Political Prelate of the Fifteenth Century', Emory University, U.S.A., Ph.D. (1973); M.L. Witchell, 'John Kemp (d. 1454): An Ecclesiastic as Statesman', University of Wales, Swansea, M.A. (1979).
 2. *Loci e Libro*, pp 36-7. Nigota ('John Kempe', pp 320-4) has shown that only in a few years during his archiepiscopate was Kemp completely absent from his York archdiocese. One is almost convinced that his efforts to spend at least some time in it, while his talents were so much in demand from the royal government, bordered on the heroic.
 3. He recognised as early as 1915 that Henry Chichele was 'one of the most distinguished men who have held his high office' (*Visitations I*, p xxv).
 4. E.g. M. Archer (ed.), *The Register of Bishop Philip Repington, 1405-19*, Lincoln Record Society, vols LVII, LVIII, LXXIV (1960-82); G.R. Dunstan (ed.), *The Register of Edmund Lacy, Bishop of Exeter (A.D. 1420-1455)*, *Registrum Commune*, Canterbury and York Society, vols LX-LXIII, LXVI (1963-72); R.L. Storey (ed.), *The Register of Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, 1406-37*, Surtees Society, vols CLXIV, CLXVI, CLXIX, CLXX, CLXXVII, CLXXXII (1949-72).

biographical articles¹ and monographs² can no longer claim that their particular bishop was an exception in showing some devotion to his diocesan duties.³

It is now becoming clear that the wholly political nature of the careers of bishops like Henry Beaufort or, perhaps, Adam Moleyns was the exception rather than the rule.⁴ Such study of individual episcopal careers has made a re-assessment of the bishops as a group more possible, and a number of scholars, including J.M. George, jnr,⁵ J.T. Rosenthal⁶ and

-
1. E.g. E.F. Jacob, 'Reynold Pecock, Bishop of Chichester', *Essays in Later Medieval History*, pp 1-34; 'Thomas Brouns, Bishop of Norwich, 1436-45', *Essays in British History Presented to Sir Keith Feiling*, ed. H.R. Trevor-Roper (1965), pp 61-83; A. Compton Reeves, 'The Careers of William Lyndwood', *Documenting the Past. Essays in Medieval History Presented to George Peddy Cuttino*, ed. J.S. Hamilton and P.J. Bradley (Woodbridge, 1989), pp 197-216; R.L. Storey, 'Marmaduke Lumley, bishop of Carlisle, 1430-50', *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society*, new series, vol. LV (1956), pp 112-31.
 2. For example, Judd, *Thomas Bekynton*, M. Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, and R.L. Storey, *Thomas Langley and the Bishopric of Durham, 1406-37* (1961). To which may be added theses like those of M.L. Witchell, 'John Kemp'; J.A. Nigota, 'John Kempe'; V.G. Davis, 'The Life and Career of William Waynflete, Bishop of Winchester, 1447-1486', Trinity College, Dublin, Ph.D. (1985) - I am grateful to Dr Davis for lending me a copy of her thesis.
 3. Not, of course, that all the authors cited above make such claims.
 4. G.L. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort, A Study in Lancastrian Ascendancy and Decline* (Oxford, 1988) concentrates, naturally, on Beaufort's political career. Study of his ecclesiastical activity is hampered by the loss of much of his Winchester register. Adam Moleyns has yet to be studied in detail.
 5. 'The English Episcopate and the Crown, 1437-50', Columbia University, U.S.A., Ph.D. (1976).
 6. 'The Training of an Elite Group: English Bishops in the Fifteenth Century', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, new series, vol. LX, part 5 (Philadelphia, 1970); 'The Fifteenth-century Episcopate: Careers and Bequests', *Studies in Church History* 10, ed. D. Baker (Oxford, 1973), pp 117-27; 'Lancastrian Bishops and Educational Benefaction', *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society. Essays in Honour of F.R.H. Du Boulay*, ed. C. Harper-Bill and C.M. Barron (Woodbridge, 1985), pp 199-211. Such studies suffer, to some extent, from his decision to omit the holders of Welsh dioceses - perhaps following the example, set (with more justification) by M.D. Knowles in 'The English Bishops, 1070-1532', (ctd on next page)

R.J. Knecht¹ have undertaken such study. However, perhaps the most important contribution has been that of R.G. Davies, who examined the careers of all the bishops of England and Wales between 1375 and 1443 in his Ph.D. thesis.² This thesis and his subsequently published articles³ have done much to confirm the impression that, while the Lancastrian episcopal bench was perhaps not over-flowing with saints⁴ and scholars,⁵ it was manned by an educated and able group who, however they came by their episcopal status,⁶ expended at least a large proportion of their considerable talents and energies on diocesan affairs. If bishops were no longer saints and missionaries, they were, at least for the most part, respectable.⁷

In the days before such revisionism, one bishop, William Alnwick, bishop of Norwich (1426-36/7) and Lincoln (1436/7-49) was seen as particularly worthy of honourable mention. He has been described as 'one of the worthiest prelates of the century';⁸ and Hamilton Thompson, whose meticulous examination and publication of

(ctd) *Medieval Studies Presented to Aubrey Gwynn*, ed. J.A. Watt, J.B. Morrall and F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1961), pp 283-96.

1. 'The Episcopate and the Wars of the Roses', *University of Birmingham Historical Journal*, vol. VI (1957-8), pp 108-31.
2. 'The Episcopate in England and Wales, 1375-1443', Manchester University Ph.D. (1974).
3. Especially 'The Episcopate', *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England. Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A.R. Myers*, ed. C.H. Clough (Liverpool, 1982), pp 51-89; 'Martin V and the English Episcopate, with particular reference to his campaign for the repeal of the Statute of Provisors', *EHR*, vol. XCII (1977), pp 309-44.
4. Although Knowles, 'The English Bishops', p 295, describes Edmund Lacy as a 'near miss' for canonization.
5. Although William Lyndwood and Reginald Pecock were surely men who would have attained scholarly eminence in any age.
6. For some discussion of pre-episcopal careers, see Appendix I.
7. It may, of course, be that our notions of respectability have changed since the pre-war days of Hamilton Thompson. In an age when some bishops publicly air their doubts about basic tenets of Christian belief and advocate the ordination of the divorced, bishops who enforced orthodoxy and celibacy have perhaps an attraction inconceivable to those brought up in the Victorian heyday of the Church of England.
8. A.R. Myers, *England in the Late Middle Ages* (1952), p 157. Cf. W.W. Capes, *The English Church in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries* (1900), p 205.

many of the records of his career surely qualified him to judge, described him as 'a prelate who, amid the religious decline and political confusion of his age, maintained worthily the traditions bequeathed to the see of Lincoln by St Hugh, Robert Grosseteste and John of Dalderby'.¹ It is perhaps indicative of the extent of the recovery of the image of his colleagues since Hamilton Thompson's day that R.G Davies, far from singling William Alnwick out for particular praise, describes him as a 'careerist officer of state'.²

This is perhaps unfair. While one can perhaps ignore the sentiments of those who composed the eulogy which decorated his tomb,³ it is clear from chronicle references⁴ that some, at least, of his contemporaries considered him praiseworthy. Two hundred years after his death, Francis Godwin considered that the choice of William Alnwick as confessor to Henry VI indicated that he was '*Homo propter doctrinam et moram sanctitatem... celebris*'.⁵

Whatever William Alnwick's moral attributes, in one aspect he is particularly outstanding. His two episcopates have left a peculiarly rich legacy of documents serving as evidence not only of his own activities but also of the condition of the church of his day. Other bishops may have left evidence of visitation of religious houses,⁶ prosecution of heretics⁷ and other offenders,⁸

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1. *Visitations* II, p xxx.
 2. 'The Episcopate', *Profession, Vocation and Culture*, p 64.
 3. See Appendix II.
 4. See below, pp 284-5, 324.
 5. F. Godwin, *De Praesulibus Angliae Commentarius, Omnium Episcoporum Necnon et Cardinalium Ejusdem Gentis Nomina, Tempora, Seriem, atque Actiones Maxime Memorabiles*, continued by W. Richardson (Cambridge, 1743), p 298.
 6. E.g. Bishops Goldwell and Nykke of Norwich (*Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich, A.D. 1492-1532*, ed. A. Jessopp, Camden Society, new series, vol. XLIII (1888)).
 7. E.g. Archbishop Chichele (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, *passim*).
 8. E.g. Bishop Atwater of Lincoln (*An Episcopal Court Book for the Diocese of Lincoln, 1514-20*, ed. M. Bowker, Lincoln Record Society, vol. LXI (1967)).

and disputes with religious houses¹ and within cathedral chapters.² Few, if any, have left substantial documentation of all these issues.

As with most medieval bishops, the major source to have survived from both William Alnwick's episcopates is his episcopal register.³ His Norwich register is a bound volume of 146 folios, the first seven comprising the *sede vacante* register covering the period April 1425 to August 1426. Folios 8-90⁴ are mainly taken up by institutions, collations and exchanges, although they also include Alnwick's papal bull of provision and the appointment of his officials.⁵ Folio 91 is headed '*Institutiones et collaciones expedite per Reverendum in Christo Patrem et Dominum Dominum Willelmum Dei Gracia Episcopum Norwicensem extra diocesim*'. Folios 91-117 have been described by David Smith as a register *extra diocesim*,⁶ but folios 91-5, which contain institutions undertaken by Alnwick while outside the diocese, are the only ones properly so described. The rest of the section contains memoranda, including licences, dispensations, wills, royal writs and other items issued and received throughout the episcopate, whether or not the bishop was in residence in the diocese.⁷ The remainder of the register

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1. See, e.g., Judd, *Thomas Bekynton*, pp 135-6 (Glastonbury).
 2. Nigota, 'John Kempe', pp 518-40 (disputed election of dean of York).
 3. For Norwich: NRO: REG. 5/9, henceforth: 'Norw. Reg.'; for Lincoln: LAO: Episcopal Register XVIII, henceforth: Linc. Reg.. They are briefly described by D.M. Smith, *Guide to Bishops' Registers of England and Wales. A Survey from the Middle Ages to the Abolition of the Episcopacy in 1646* (1981), pp 154 and 119 respectively.
 4. Which have been bound out of order. The correct order is: 17-27, 8-16, and 28-90.
 5. Folios 17-19.
 6. *Bishops' Registers*, p 154. There is also a slight disorder of folios here; f 117 belongs between 96 and 97.
 7. This accepts Smith's definition of a register *extra diocesim* as a 'register of acts performed by a bishop when outside his diocese' (*ibid.*, p x). Many of the institutions recorded on folios 8-90, were incidentally, performed while Alnwick was outside the diocese.

records ordinations performed by Alnwick and his suffragan between August 1426 and December 1436.¹

The Lincoln register, also a bound volume, comprises 195 folios.² The first seventy-seven folios contain memoranda, licences, dispensations, wills and commissions, which are arranged 'in considerable confusion'.³ There is a section devoted to collations of cathedral prebends and dignitaries,⁴ and the rest of the register is taken up by institutions arranged by archdeaconry. These entries, despite being so divided, are no more well organised within their divisions than the memoranda section.⁵

There are no consistory court records remaining for William Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate and, apart from the very valuable series of probate registers,⁶ no record of the formal *acta* of the Norwich consistory court survives from before 1499.⁷ However, there do remain parts of two court books of the bishop's audience court. For Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate there survive pages relating to the archdeaconries of Lincoln, Huntingdon, and Buckingham.⁸ This fragment was described by Hamilton Thompson in

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1. For a discussion of the register of Bishop Brouns (1436-45) and its similarities to, and differences from, Alnwick's, see E.F. Jacob 'Thomas Brouns', pp 70-1.
 2. Folios 25-6, 78-9, 112 and 171, and probably others as well, are missing. 180v, for example, ends in the middle of an entry.
 3. Smith, *Bishops' Registers*, p 119.
 4. Ff 107-111.
 5. Hamilton Thompson discusses the Lincoln register in *Visitations* II, pp xxx-xliii, describing it as 'compiled negligently and imperfectly' (p xxxi); and the Norwich register in *Visitations* II, pp 404-5. For a useful counteraction of his oft-repeated statement that a bishop's register 'is a book of precedents' (e.g. *ibid.*, p xxx), see Haines, 'William Gray', p 440.
 6. NRO: Will Registers; that for Alnwick's episcopate is called 'Surflete'.
 7. Burnham, p 33.
 8. LAO: Cj O, referred to here as 'Court book'. (See K. Major, *A Handlist of the Records of the bishop of Lincoln and of the Archdeacons of Lincoln and Stow* (1953), p 55.)

1947 and a proportion of it was published by him.¹ Although his statement that the records dated only from the years 1446-49 is true for the bulk of the material, in fact it also records a number of cases from earlier years.² Nevertheless, the book is not complete for any of the three archdeaconries it covers, and contains only fleeting references to the other five archdeaconries comprising the diocese of Lincoln. Any conclusions reached on the basis of analysis of its contents will therefore necessarily be incomplete.

While the Lincoln court book covers an enormous range of cases, the surviving Norwich court book relates solely to one kind of crime, heresy. The manuscript which now forms section eight of Westminster Cathedral manuscript B.2³ is also incomplete.⁴ It is possible to have some idea of the missing contents from the work of John Foxe, who seems to have used the manuscript before parts were lost.⁵ This manuscript may have been a neat copy sent to Archbishop Chichele, as a certificate of Alnwick's action taken against heretics. This would have been in accordance with a request

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1. Perhaps he published about a quarter of it in *Eng. Clergy*, pp 206-246. This partial publication has meant that rarely, if ever, has the original been consulted since. His almost complete transcript is stored with the court book in LAO. Since he used the pages, they have been bound with little regard for the original arrangement (Huntingdon is on pp 1-40, Lincoln on pp 41-82, 93-8 and Buckingham on pp 83-92, 99-113). References to this court book below refer to the modern pagination as the notional foliation used by Thompson is now of little use.
 2. There are entries for twelve sessions of the court in 1444 and for seven sessions in 1445. This compares with thirty-eight for 1446; forty-nine for 1447; twenty-four for 1448; and forty-six for 1449. (This list ignores those cases dating from after Alnwick's episcopate and those that are undated.)
 3. Now published as *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428-31*, ed. N. Tanner, Camden Society, 4th series, vol. XX (1977), henceforth '*Trials*'.
 4. J. Fines, 'Studies in the Lollard Heresy. Being an Examination of the Evidence from the Dioceses of Norwich, Lincoln, Coventry and Lichfield, and Ely, during the Period 1430-1530', Sheffield University Ph.D. (1964), p 261.
 5. Foxe, vol. III, pp 584-6, 586-7, 592-3, 593, 596-7, and 599-600 contain material lost from the manuscript.

made in the 1428 convocation which preceded Alnwick's proceedings.¹

William Alnwick is perhaps best known for the surviving record of his visitations of the religious houses of the Lincoln diocese,² which was published, together with some supplementary material it contained, in an excellent edition by Hamilton Thompson.³ 'Taken as a whole, this is by far the richest collection of actual [visitation] minutes in existence.'⁴ In addition, there also survives a volume of some forty (originally forty-six) folios devoted to Alnwick's visitations of, and meetings with, the Lincoln cathedral chapter between 1437 and 1443.⁵ The bishop's register also contains, among other records of importance, a complete transcript of Alnwick's *Laudum* of 1439. A contemporary copy of his *Novum Registrum* for the cathedral, described by Bradshaw and Wordsworth as a 'second draft', survives among the collection of manuscripts left by Matthew Parker to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge.⁶

These records, originating in the bishop's registry, are complemented by those of the cathedral chapters. Chief among these are the Lincoln cathedral chapter act books which record acts and decisions of the weekly, and occasional, meetings of the chapter,

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 190. Discussed by J.A.F Thomson, 'John Foxe and some sources for Lollard History: Notes for a Critical Appraisal', in *Studies in Church History* 2, ed. G.J. Cuming (1965), pp 251-7. However, in informal conversation, Dr Tanner has expressed doubts about this suggestion; he does not consider the manuscript to be neat enough to be a 'neat copy'. It was certainly at Lambeth in Archbishop Ussher's time. It is not known how it came into the custody of the cardinal archbishop of Westminster.
 2. LAO: Vj 1. See Major, *Handlist*, p 74.
 3. *Visitations* II.
 4. D. Knowles, *The Religious Orders in England*, vol. II, *The End of the Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1961), p 209.
 5. LAO: Vj 2. (See Major, *Handlist*, p 74) A large proportion of this volume was transcribed by A.R. Maddison and published by C. Wordsworth in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 364-465.
 6. Corpus Christi Ms. 108, no 57 (see M.R. James, *A Descriptive Catalogue of the Manuscripts in the Library of Corpus Christi College Cambridge*, 2 vols (Cambridge, 1912), pp 226 ff). A transcript of this section of the manuscript was published in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 268-363.

including occasional confirmations of the bishop's 'acta'.¹ Almost as impressive a survival are the accounts of the common fund which exist for several years of Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate.² These are a useful supplementary source of information about the chapter's activities. Nothing comparable to the Lincoln chapter act books survives for Norwich cathedral priory. The main surviving records of the cathedral, contemporary with Alnwick's episcopate, are the account rolls of the obedientiaries.³ These accounts supply some useful information about the business relations of bishop and cathedral priory, but nothing on a scale comparable to the Lincoln sources.

In contrast to the cathedrals over which Alnwick presided, his own administration has left little in the way of financial records. However, there do survive account rolls of Thomas Ryngrstede, the bishop of Norwich's receiver general, for the years 1428-9 and 1429-30,⁴ and of John Wardale, the bishop of Lincoln's commissary general in the archdeaconry of Leicester, for the years 1439-43,⁵ which give valuable additional information.

With such a plethora of surviving documentation, it is not surprising that some aspects of Bishop Alnwick's career have already received scholarly attention. An attempt to make sense of the medieval history of Lincoln cathedral was made at the end of

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1. LAO: A 2/30-35. See D.M. Williamson, *Lincoln Muniments* (Lincoln, 1956) pp 6, 24-6. The series commences in 1305. K. Edwards (*The English Secular Cathedrals in the Middle Ages. A Constitutional Study with Special reference to the Fourteenth Century* (Manchester, 2nd edn, 1967), p 30) remarks that the Lincoln act books are inferior to those of Salisbury: 'They appear like hastily written notes although sometimes documents produced in meetings were copied out at length'. This apparent carelessness is certainly evident in the 1440's when John Pakington was clerk of the chapter.
 2. LAO: Bj 2/12-15. See Williamson, *Lincoln Muniments*, pp 28-9.
 3. NRO: DCN 1. See H.W. Saunders, *An Introduction to the Obedientary and Manor Rolls of Norwich Cathedral Priory* (Norwich, 1930). Unfortunately, few of his comments relate to the fifteenth century, which he seems to consider of little interest.
 4. NRO: EST 15/1/1-2.
 5. LAO: BP Accounts 5.

the nineteenth century by Henry Bradshaw and Christopher Wordsworth. Bradshaw had worked for several years on the history of the statutes of Lincoln cathedral. After he died, in 1886, his work was edited by Canon Wordsworth in the three volumes of the *Lincoln Cathedral Statutes* published in 1892 and 1897.¹ The first and second volumes contain long introductions constructed by Wordsworth out of Bradshaw's notes. Volume I is devoted to a transcript of the text of the *Liber Niger* or Black Book.² Volumes II and III trace the history of the cathedral's statutes up to the nineteenth century. A large number of the documents published relate to the period of William Alnwick's episcopate (1436-49): among them are the *Laudum* and *Novum Registrum*; a large proportion of the bishop's cathedral visitation book; and extracts from his register and the cathedral chapter acts books. This publication is essential for any study of Alnwick's relationship with Lincoln cathedral chapter, but it is not an easy work to use and a great deal of analysis of the material it contains is necessary before anything like a clear picture can be obtained.³

These volumes have been used by various scholars, most notably Hamilton Thompson, whose short description of events at Lincoln under Dean Macworth is probably the clearest available.⁴ They were also a major source for Kathleen Edwards' masterly exposition of

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1. This is described as being two parts in three volumes. For the sake of clarity, I shall refer to vols I, II and III.
 2. Completed in the fourteenth century, with later additions, this was the main repository of the customs and statutes by which the cathedral was ruled.
 3. Cf. K. Edwards *The English Secular Cathedrals*, p x, n: 'The work of Henry Bradshaw, published in the massive introduction to the three volume *Lincoln Cathedral Statutes*, 1892-7, is indispensable for any serious study of the subject; but the form is rather too diffuse and the subject matter too specialised for the general reader'. The *Laudum* and the *Novum Registrum* were first published in *Statuta Ecclesiae Cathedralis Lincolnensis*, ed. C. Wordsworth (snr) (1873). The *Laudum* as published in LCS was republished, with a translation by R.M. Woolley, as *The Award of William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln. A.D. 1439* (Cambridge, 1913) - henceforth '*Laudum*'.
 4. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 90-8.

the constitutions of the *English Secular Cathedrals*.¹ Hamilton Thompson's edition of the records of Alnwick's visitations of religious houses has also been much used. It has served as a source for studies ranging from broad discussions of the general conditions of the religious orders² to detailed accounts of particular foundations³ or minute details of the life of the religious.⁴ Similarly, the record of Bishop Alnwick's heresy trials in the diocese of Norwich has been much used both before and after its publication, most notably, perhaps, by J.D. Fines,⁵ J.A.F. Thomson,⁶ C. Kightly,⁷ M.E. Aston,⁸ and A. Hudson.⁹

With such a plethora of published material, does the career of William Alnwick merit a full-scale study? It would still seem so. Those who have used the records generated from his episcopates have rarely examined them from the point of view of the bishop and his administration;¹⁰ and no scholar has done more than touch on, often

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1. Remarkably little has been published about the later history of Norwich cathedral priory. Although one or two individual cathedral priories have been the subject of monographs (e.g. R.B. Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-1450* (Cambridge, 1973)), Norwich is not one of them. Saunders (*Obedientiary Rolls*) does not relate the cathedral's history, and E.H. Carter's *Studies in Norwich Cathedral History. An Episcopal Visitation of the Priory in 1308, and an Archiepiscopal Ajudication on Priory Rights in 1411* (Norwich, 1935), while publishing two important documents, has little interpretative value (cf. C.R. Cheney's review, *EHR*, vol. LII (1937), pp 154-5).
 2. Cf. Knowles *Religious Orders*, vol. II, pp 207-15, and Hamilton Thompson himself in *Eng. Clergy*, pp 161-86.
 3. See, for example, the relevant volumes of the *VCH*.
 4. E.g. C. Harper-Bill 'The Labourer is Worthy of his Hire? - Complaints about Diet in Late Medieval English Monasteries', *The Church in Pre-Reformation Society*, pp 95-107.
 5. 'Studies in the Lollard Heresy'.
 6. *The Later Lollards, 1414-1520* (Oxford, 1965).
 7. 'The Early Lollards. A Survey of Popular Lollard Activity in England, 1382-1428', York University D.Phil. (1975).
 8. Most notably in the essays collected together in *Lollards and Reformers. Images and Literacy in Late Medieval England* (1984).
 9. In many works. See especially *Lollards and their Books* (1985); *The Premature Reformation. Wycliffite Texts and Lollard History* (Oxford, 1988).
 10. The partial exception is Hamilton Thompson, who in *Visitations*, I-II, has some discussion of Alnwick's pre-episcopal career and his episcopates, but not in any great depth.

inaccurately, his service to the crown.' It therefore seems legitimate to examine the bishop 'in the round', taking in turn his relationships with his cathedrals, his administrators and his 'parishioners',² lay, clerical and religious, and to place this examination in the context of his contribution to the lay and ecclesiastical politics of his age.³

William Alnwick is not unusual in having served more than one diocese in his career.⁴ However, few, if any, examples can be provided of one man serving two such important, non-metropolitan, dioceses for a substantial period each.⁵ The diocese of Lincoln was, except for the archdiocese of York which encompassed a considerably smaller population, the largest English diocese; indeed, one of the largest dioceses in Christendom. Norwich, while not so extensive, was heavily populated. William Alnwick therefore presents a perhaps unique opportunity to contrast the activities and concerns of one bishop in two comparable dioceses. It is for this reason that his episcopates are considered thematically rather than chronologically.

The shape of the study which follows has, of course, been very much determined by the surviving sources. It is not a study of the

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1. Hamilton Thompson, for example, (*Visitations* II, p xv) suggested that he relinquished the privy seal in 1428 and was followed in this by A.B. Emden in *BRUC*, p 11.
 2. Dr D.M. Owen informs me that this is the correct term for those inhabiting a bishop's diocese.
 3. In 1931, Hamilton Thompson wrote to C.W. Foster 'I personally think that if a young candidate for a research degree can find a definite person...and concentrate herself upon him, it is much better for her than if she tackled a somewhat vague general subject...I trust that, if she attacks Bishop..., she will find him...agreeable..., but she must not apply such affectionate expressions to his lordship' (LAO: Lincoln Record Society correspondence files).
 4. Many examples could be provided from the period (see *HBC*, pp 228-84). Most notorious, perhaps, is John Kemp, who progressed from Rochester to Chichester, London, York and Canterbury between 1419 and 1452.
 5. Perhaps the only comparable episcopal career in the period is that of Robert Neville, bishop of Salisbury 1427-38 and of Durham 1438-57, but his political career is hardly equal to Alnwick's, and he has not left a comparable amount of documentation.

clergy, although many of the sources used and the themes explored may assist such discussion. Neither is there much examination of the bishop as a temporal lord. The surviving records are not sufficient to provide for an in-depth study of either the bishop's management of his estates or his relationship with his tenants. Rather, it is an attempt to consider how one man dealt with some of the major tasks and problems facing him and his contemporaries, in the context of the similar, but not identical, dioceses he ruled over. It is hoped that this approach will serve to illuminate both the man and his servants in particular, and fifteenth-century ecclesiastical history in general.

William Alnwick was typical of many of his generation in the manner in which he progressed towards his first diocese.¹ From obscure origins, he proceeded to Cambridge, probably as a result of the patronage of Stephen Scrope, archdeacon of Richmond and chancellor of the university. He had qualified for a doctorate in civil law by 1419, by which time he seems to have joined the eminent group of lawyers serving Archbishop Chichele. Through some means, he caught the eye of Henry V, who made him his secretary by May 1421. By this date he had begun to collect some of the substantial number of benefices, most notably the archdeaconry of Salisbury, which fell to him as a favoured servant of the crown. He accompanied Henry V on his last journey to France, and was with him when he died in August 1422. Returning with the king's body to England, he was appointed keeper of the privy seal, in succession to John Stafford. As keeper, his promotion to the episcopate was almost assured. In the confused period that followed the death of Archbishop Bowet of York, in 1423, he was originally suggested as a candidate for the rich and compact see of Ely. However, in the eventual round of promotions which followed the agreement of John, duke of Bedford, with Pope Martin V, he was finally promoted to

1. For more detail, see R.C.E. Hayes, 'The Pre-Episcopal Career of William Alnwick, Bishop of Norwich and Lincoln', *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond (Gloucester, 1987), pp 90-107. An amended version of this article is to be found as Appendix I, pp 356-76, below.

Norwich (in February 1426), a diocese which was rather less wealthy, and a good deal more demanding for a conscientious bishop, than Ely.

Whether he was to prove an energetic diocesan still remained to be seen. Some guide to his future career may perhaps be taken from his close association with the 'muscularly pious' and orthodox Henry V. In 1421, William Alnwick had accompanied the king on his last itinerary around his English realm. In doing so, he had played a minor part in both the attempts of Bishop Fleming to settle the conflicts between the dean and chapter of Lincoln, and of King Henry himself to enforce reform on the Benedictine order in England. While his attachment to Henry V was perhaps to set the tone for his political future, these two events served as an appropriate prelude to two of the major themes of William Alnwick's own episcopal career.

II. CONFLICT AND COOPERATION: BISHOP ALNWICK'S RELATIONS WITH HIS CATHEDRALS AND CITIES

On his consecration, a bishop became head not only of a diocese but also of a much smaller community, that of the cathedral close. Throughout medieval England, it was the bishop's throne or 'cathedra' which entitled his church to be called a cathedral, just as it was the cathedral's presence which gave the town in which it was situated the title of city. To this day, the significance of the city is reflected in the fact that it is from its name that the bishop derives his own title. Within the city, the men comprising the cathedral chapter enjoyed enormous influence. The later middle ages saw considerable growth of civic pride and constitutional development within English cities. The result of this close co-habitation of so many men aware of their own standing was frequently to make the city a site for disputes, within the cathedral chapters, between the chapter and the bishop, and between the chapter and the citizens, to say nothing of internal squabbling among the citizens themselves. William Alnwick's episcopates at Norwich and Lincoln were to witness examples of all these kinds of disputes.¹

1. The Constitutional and Historical Background

The two cathedrals ruled in succession by William Alnwick reflected the fundamental division of the English cathedrals between secular and regular chapters. Norwich cathedral was administered by a priory of Benedictine monks, and Lincoln cathedral by a chapter of secular clerks.

Although the superior of the monks of the cathedral church of Holy Trinity, Norwich was a prior, the convent was not the daughter house of any abbey. In English monastic cathedrals, the bishop occupied the stall in the choir normally reserved for an abbot,²

1 The main sources for this chapter are discussed above, pp 6-12.
2. A. Hamilton Thompson, *The Cathedral Churches of England* (1925), p 119; cf. C.R. Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation of Monasteries in the Thirteenth Century* (Manchester, 2nd edn, 1983), p xii.

but, although he had visitatorial powers and a role in the appointment and removal of obedientiaries, he was not the prior's abbatial superior.¹ The prior was, however, subject to the chapters of English Benedictines, meeting every three years at Northampton.² He ruled over about fifty monks in the early years of the fifteenth century.³ In this, he was assisted by the subprior, and, as elsewhere, by a group of the most able monks who were regularly chosen as obedientiaries to carry out the duties of, and administer the income dedicated to, a particular branch of the priory's activity.⁴ Of equivalent rank to the obedientiaries were the priors of the cathedral's five dependent cells. These were situated at St Leonard's in the Thorpe Wood (Norwich), Bishop's Lynn, Great Yarmouth and Aldeby in Norfolk, and Hoxne in Suffolk. In addition to his authority over the cathedral and its cells, the prior had a peculiar jurisdiction spreading over much of the city and its suburbs which, while subject to the bishop, was exempt from archidiaconal jurisdiction. He thus wielded considerable influence. Within this all-powerful position lay the seeds of potential disputes with both the bishop and his cathedral city.

In contrast to the monastic priory at Norwich was the secular chapter founded in 1092 by Bishop Remigius in Lincoln.⁵ By the

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1. E.F. Jacob, 'Thomas Brouns', p 77.
 2. See W.A. Pantin, 'The General and Provincial Chapters of the English Black Monks, 1215-1540', *TRHS*, 4th series, vol. X (1927), pp 195-263.
 3. Saunders, *Obedientary Rolls*, p 5.
 4. Saunders, *Obedientary Rolls*, *passim*. Account rolls survive for twelve obedientiary offices. Their roles are also described by Blomefield, vol. III, pp 607-12. He was followed by *Monasticon*, vol. IV, pp 7-24; and by the *VCH Norfolk*, vol II (1906), pp 313-28. Saunders (p 19) castigates the *VCH* account as totally lacking in accuracy: 'neither student nor general reader must trust in any part of this very unfortunate account'. In turn, Saunders is criticized, although more mildly, by C.R. Cheney, 'Norwich Cathedral Priory in the Fourteenth Century', pp 93-120 in *BJRL*, vol. XX (1936), p 97.
 5. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, pp 13-14 points out that Bradshaw was wrong in his conclusion that Lincoln, Salisbury and York had all been established directly on the pattern of Bayeux cathedral (*LCS*, vol. I, pp 33-6, 101-31). She concludes that, while Rouen was probably the basic model, all the English cathedrals developed along their own parallel lines without slavishly following any precedent.

later middle ages there were no less than fifty-eight canonries and prebends attached to Lincoln cathedral.¹ Foremost among the canons were the five dignitaries of dean, precentor, chancellor, treasurer and subdean, and the eight archdeacons. All the dignities, except that of the dean, which was elective, were in the bishop's collation.²

The dean of Lincoln wielded considerable power. Although he owed canonical obedience to the bishop, the canons all swore obedience to him. He acted, *ex officio*, as president of the chapter but, despite claims and actions to the contrary by Dean Macworth (1412-51) and his predecessors, he lacked the authority to act without the chapter. The subdean, although presiding over chapter meetings during the dean's absence, ranked below the other dignitaries. Senior to the archdeacons but below the dean were the other three dignitaries: the precentor, whose first duty was to rule the choir; the chancellor who ruled the city grammar school, supervised, and was expected to give, theological lectures, supervised the liturgical readings, and was responsible for theological books;³ and the treasurer, whose chief duty, like that of the sacrist in monastic cathedrals, was to keep the treasures of the cathedral and provide the necessities for cathedral services. Elected regularly from the body of residentiary canons to administer the common and fabric funds of the cathedral were the provost, who was assisted in his work by the clerk of the common, and two keepers, or *custodes*, of the fabric.

The cathedral dignitaries all took oaths to reside within the cathedral close. Other canons were not, however, bound to reside

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1. As compared with fifty-five at Wells, fifty-two at Salisbury and thirty-six at York (R.B. Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages, 1215-1500', pp 44-109 in *A History of York Minster*, ed. G.E. Aylmer and R. Cant (Oxford, 1977), p 53).
 2. The main sources for this discussion of the constitution of Lincoln cathedral are *LCS*, *passim*; and Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, *passim*. Additional sources and particular references to *LCS* and Edwards will be noted.
 3. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, pp 176-216. He had surprisingly little responsibility for the secretarial and record keeping duties of the cathedral's notaries (*ibid.*, p 209).

and by the fifteenth century there were rarely more than about eight to ten in residence at any one time.¹ Residence was carefully defined: after three years of major residence (thirty-four weeks and five days per year), a canon was permitted to enter 'minor' residence, promising to reside for one third of the year.² As elsewhere, only these resident canons were entitled to share in the common fund. Non-resident canons were compelled to pay 'septisms', a tax of a seventh of the income from their prebends.³ They were also expected to provide a vicar to perform their duties in the choir. These vicars choral, numbering about forty and living communal lives by the fifteenth-century, ranged from young, and occasionally rowdy, clerks to older and relatively senior priests, some of whom were graduates. Three senior vicars choral acted as succentor, vice-chancellor and sacrist. Many of the priest vicars supplemented their income by acting as chaplains in the chantries of the cathedral. The richest chantry was established at St Peter's altar for the souls of the deceased bishops of the diocese. Its keeper was also, *ex officio*, official or auditor of causes for the dean and chapter. His status was thus almost equal to that of a canon and his income was probably greater than that of the holders of some of the lesser prebends.

Ranked below the vicars and the cantarists came the twelve poor clerks of the common form, whose usual task was to act as assistants to the chantry priests. The youngest inhabitants of the choir were the choristers, twelve belonging to the cathedral and six attached to the Burghersh chantry.⁴ It is not perhaps entirely surprising that a community with such a large number of boys and

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1. A situation typical of other secular cathedrals (cf. Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages', pp 57, 105).
 2. LCS, vol. II, p cciii.
 3. Non-resident canons of Salisbury cathedral paid one-fifth of their income (K. Edwards, 'Cathedral of Salisbury', pp 156-210 in *VCH Wiltshire*, vol. III (1956), p 162).
 4. For the history of the *ministri inferiores* see A.R. Maddison, *A Short Account of the Vicars Choral, Poor Clerks, Organists and Choristers of Lincoln Cathedral from the Twelfth century to the Accession of Edward VI* (1878).

youths was subject to complaints about lack of devotion and decorum.'

The bishop's position within this bustling community,² was that of both father in God and, in a sense, confrère to the canons. He was allotted a share in the canons' recitation of the psalter, although it is not clear whether he ever held a fixed prebend.³ When resident in Lincoln, he was expected to preside in the cathedral on the major feasts of the year and to entertain the cathedral community. Although he was to be treated with the utmost honour, over-insistence on the pre-eminence of his own position might cause a bishop to come into conflict with a dean, or for that matter a monastic prior, equally aware of his own dignity.

There was frequent conflict between bishops and their chapters, as each were consolidating their positions, during the middle ages. It is generally agreed, however, that the majority of the serious disputes had been resolved by the fifteenth century. Relations for this period have been described as 'amical and cautiously paternal'⁴ and even 'rosy'.⁵ Unfortunately it would seem that William Alnwick's two cathedrals proved the major exceptions to this happy rule. At Norwich, the episcopates of Henry Despenser (1370-1406) and Alexander Trottington (1406-13) witnessed a lengthy dispute between successive bishops and priors.⁶ In 1411, Archbishop Arundel arbitrated between Bishop Trottington and the prior, Robert Brunham.⁷ This award affirmed the bishop's role in over-seeing the admission and profession of monks and confirming their appointment as obedientiary officers. The bishop was also to

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1. Cf. Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages', p 91.
 2. Cathedrals also employed a large number of lay people, ranging from bell-ringers to seamstresses.
 3. *Eng. Clergy*, p 74; *LCS*, vol. I, pp 102, 301, etc.
 4. *Eng. Clergy*, p 5.
 5. Davies, Ph.D., p 516.
 6. NRO: DCN 42/2 contains a considerable number of documents relating to these disputes for the years 1393-1411. Carter, *Studies*, discusses the issues at some length (pp 33-45). For a short, clear account, see N.P. Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich, 1370-1532* (Toronto, 1984), p 160.
 7. See Carter, *Studies*, pp 47-72.

confirm the prior and chapter's choice of dean of the jurisdiction of the cathedral's manors. The bishop's visitatorial rights and duties, and the priory's probate jurisdiction, were confirmed, as were the priory's powers to sell corrodies and farm out ecclesiastical portions. Finally, Tottington was instructed to pay the priory both the tithes that he owed and the required annual rent for his palace chapel. This agreement, sealed at Norwich on 15 April 1411, ushered in a peaceful period in the relations between bishop and cathedral, which still obtained when Alnwick's predecessor, John Wakering, died in 1425.¹

The peaceful situation which Alnwick acceded to at Norwich was in marked contrast to the strife which he found at Lincoln cathedral. Where the quarrel at Norwich had been between the bishop and his prior, the Lincoln conflicts were, at least initially, between the incumbent dean and a large proportion of the chapter, with successive bishops as unhappy secondary parties struggling valiantly but unsuccessfully to procure lasting peace. The first disputes arose during the tenure of Dean John Sheppey (1387/8-1411/2).² In 1412, Sheppey was succeeded as dean by John Macworth, whose ability, if not necessarily his character, is attested to by the fact that he had been chancellor to Prince Henry. For the entire period of his incumbency he was in conflict with at least some of his brethren. The attempts of Bishop Philip Repington (1404-19) to make peace were, apparently, unsuccessful.³ In 1421, his successor, Bishop Richard Fleming, produced an award which, it was hoped, would put an end to all quarrels.

For the purpose of this study, the most interesting point about this award was the part played by the future bishop, William Alnwick. In April 1421, Henry V and his new wife, Katherine, visited Lincoln in the course of a royal progress.⁴ Among others accompanying them was William Alnwick, the king's secretary. As a doctor of civil law and a notary public of some standing, he was

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1. PRO: Chancery: Ecclesiastical Petitions (C 84): C 84/43/11.
 2. LCS, vol. III, p 249.
 3. *Ibid*, p 257.
 4. J.W.F. Hill, *Medieval Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1948), p 271.

well qualified for his commission, together with Master Richard Gordon, also doctor of civil law, to collect together the information necessary for Fleming to make his award.¹ This award, which was primarily concerned with the dean's right to visit the cathedral and prebendal churches, was delivered to the dean and chapter on 14 April in the presence of the king and his entourage, which included Sir Robert, Lord Willoughby, John Stafford, keeper of the privy seal, and William Alnwick. Having been sealed by Fleming in London on 27 May 1421, the award was ratified by letters patent on 30 May.² Two years later it was confirmed by the bishops of Durham and London on the instructions of Martin V. The pope also ordered William Alnwick, now archdeacon of Salisbury, to confirm the dean and chapter's agreement about the procurations canons were to pay the dean when he visited their prebendal churches.³

This award seems to have effected a temporary lull in the chapter's troubles. Macworth's relations with at least some of his fellow canons cannot have been too hostile as he is described in a chapter act of May 1431 as 'bishop elect'.⁴ This calm state of affairs did not last long, as the new bishop, William Gray, discovered on his primary visitation of the cathedral, in April 1432.⁵ Gray's consequent injunctions, which were couched in the most reasonable terms, would seem to reveal that he was eminently suitable as a peacemaker. In September 1434, he repeated the procedure of arbitrating between the canons.⁶ The essence of the dispute seems to have been the attempt by both dean and chapter to act without, and against, each other; a problem which was compounded by the dean's failure either to reside, and perform his

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1. LAO: A 2/5 - contemporary copy of the award in the dean and chapter's archives.
 2. LAO: A 2/5; *CPR*, 1416-22, pp 404-6.
 3. *CPL*, vol. VII, pp 272-3.
 4. LAO: A 2/32, f 57. Unless, of course, he used intimidation to secure election.
 5. See *Visitations* I, pp 128-45.
 6. The respective complaints are printed in *Laudum*, pp 17-23 and *LCS*, vol. II, pp clxv-clxii. Gray's award is printed in part in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 259-66.

duties in and to the choir, or to provide the vicar and pay the septisms required of all non-residents. Gray's award appears just, and was apparently accepted as such at the time by all parties. It was clearly acceptable to the majority of the chapter who referred to it with approbation in their later submission to Bishop Alnwick, claiming that Macworth had even promised to abide by the award in the presence of the treasurer of England, Ralph Cromwell.¹ Nevertheless, within two months the pope was appointing commissaries to investigate Macworth's unauthorised excommunication of four of his fellow canons.² Worse was to follow. On 28 June 1435, during vespers, the dean and a band of armed servants (including his notary Thomas Atkyn) set upon the chancellor, Peter Partrich, who was in his stall, dragging him from his place, beating him about the head, and tearing his vestments.³ The immediate cause of this outrage is unknown, but it is clear that Gray's hopes of peace were sadly unfounded.

Bishop Gray was preparing to visit the chapter again when he died in February 1436.⁴ It would be left to his successor to try and secure some peace in the cathedral. William Alnwick was aware of conditions at Lincoln. He had taken a small role in the establishment of Bishop Fleming's award in 1421, and it is even possible that when he came to Lincoln he had had more recent experience of its problems. It has already been noted that Ralph Cromwell had had some part in the confirmation of Gray's award. A small note on a leaf following one of the contemporary copies of Fleming's award suggests a further connection.⁵ It records that John Macworth and William Derby (archdeacon of Bedford, 1431-9, and perhaps Macworth's principal opponent in the chapter) each bound themselves to abide by an arbitration, which was to be made by '*dominis Norwic*' & *R. Cromwell*'. Beneath the note are the names

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1. LCS, vol. III, p 267.
 2. John Southam, the archdeacon of Oxford, John Haget, the cathedral's treasurer and Canons Hethe and Ingoldesby (CPL, vol. VIII, p 497). Eugenius' letter is dated 6 November. It is possible that the excommunication preceded Gray's award.
 3. LCS, vol. II, p clxxxviii; vol. III, pp 380-1.
 4. LAO: A 2/32, f 114v.
 5. LAO: A 2/5, f 14.

Macworth, J. Southam, W. Derby, and T. Warde. The dates when these men were canons of Lincoln cathedral suggest that the agreement was made between 1433 and 1438.¹ It is therefore highly likely that the '*dominus Norwic*' who shared in this arbitration with Cromwell was his friend and colleague, the bishop of Norwich, William Alnwick.² When he came to Lincoln, Bishop Alnwick was, if not forearmed, at least forewarned of the potential difficulties which lay ahead.

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1. *Fasti* I, *passim*.
 2. His successor, Thomas Brouns, is a much less likely possibility as this arbitration almost certainly predates Alnwick's own *Laudum*. It is not surprising that this small, rather scrappy note has not been commented upon, despite being recorded in *LCS* (vol. III, p 186). However, it is somewhat strange that not even Hamilton Thompson, the foremost authority on Alnwick, had noticed the part he played in 1421, even though the references are easily accessible in *CPL* and *CPR*.

2. The Vacancies and the Arrival of the New Bishop

The deaths of Bishops John Wakering of Norwich, in April 1425, and William Gray of Lincoln, in February 1436 each ushered in a relatively long vacancy of the see. In accordance with compositions made with archbishops of Canterbury, the cathedral chapters had a considerable part to play in the vacancies.¹ For the diocese of Norwich, the archbishop was free to appoint his own choice of official and keeper of the spiritualities. On 20 April 1425, Chichele made the not unsurprising appointment of Master William Bernham, the former bishop's official principal. However, the agreement with the priory ensured that the archbishop's visitor was selected from three men nominated to the archbishop by the chapter. On 18 April, the prior, Robert Brunham, and convent had written to Chichele nominating three of their confrères, William Worsted, the cathedral's subprior, John Derham, prior of the cell at Bishop's Lynn, and John Elyngham, cellarer of the priory. Chichele chose Worsted to visit the priory, city and diocese and to assist Prior Robert in visiting the cathedral chapter.²

Prior Brunham died shortly after Alnwick's consecration as bishop. Perhaps his ill health caused Worsted's responsibilities as subprior to grow. Whatever the reason, it was Brother Richard Walsham, later master of the cellar,³ who was described as '*commissario...Henrici...Cantuariensis archiepiscopi, ad visitandum civitatem et diocesim Norwicensis*' in the record of the visitation of Redlingfield nunnery, which occurred in January 1426.⁴ Thus, at least two of the more senior monks of the cathedral had experience of the exercise of some episcopal jurisdiction before they received their new bishop.

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- 1 For the compositions of Archbishops Boniface with Lincoln (1261) and Meopham (1328-33) with Norwich, see *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, pp 170-1, 196-8.
 2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 467-8.
 3. NRO: DCN 1/1/79 is the first account (1429-30) of Walsham in this position.
 4. Norw. Reg., f 104.

At Lincoln, during a vacancy, the dean exercised all episcopal jurisdiction within the city. For the rest of the diocese, the dean and chapter nominated candidates to the archbishop for his choice as official of the spiritualities.¹ On 18 February 1436, the chapter met under the presidency of the subdean, John Percy, and selected Peter Partrich, the chancellor, John Haget, the treasurer, the sub-dean, and Canon Thomas Warde for nomination.² Chichele's choice evidently fell upon Partrich.³ Subsequently, on 3 March, the chapter chose Archdeacon William Derby to oversee the bishop's temporalities.⁴ The absence of Dean Macworth from these deliberations was perhaps ominous. Certainly, a fortnight later, the chapter were appointing proctors to appeal against the dean's proposed visitation.⁵ There is no record of what transpired at this visitation, which took place between 3 and 14 July, but it is clear that relations between the dean and chapter were strained.⁶ By December, Partrich and Macworth were in serious conflict over their respective jurisdictions as official and dean. The bishop could not expect to find at Lincoln the fruits of the calm, friendly co-operation which seems to have presided over the Norwich diocese during its vacancy.

Vacancy administration was, of course, merely a means of carrying on the business of the diocese until a new bishop could be found. In theory, at least, the chapter played an important role in his appointment. In practice, the choice was usually that of the government, assisted by a papal provision, but there is little reason to doubt that the formalities of episcopal election were normally adhered to in fifteenth-century England.⁷ After the death of the previous bishop, the chapter wrote to the king for the *cong  d' lire*, or licence to elect. When this had been received, they

1. *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, pp 170-1.

2. LAO: A 2/32, f 114v.

3. For example, see an exchange recorded in Norw. Reg., f 84 (17 May 1436).

4. LAO: A 2/32, f 114v. He appears to have been provost at the time.

5. *Ibid.*, f 115.

6. *Ibid.*, ff 116-18.

7. Davies, (Ph.D., *passim*) discusses the appointment of bishops at length.

would proceed to election. Notification of their choice would then be sent to the king for confirmation and to the pope for provision. Although the *cong  d' lire* was issued to the Norwich chapter on 11 April 1425, there is no record of any election. Perhaps the convent simply waited until the king's council had decided, on 14 January 1426, to nominate William Alnwick, the keeper of the privy seal.¹ Whatever the exact procedure at Norwich cathedral, Alnwick was provided by Martin V on 27 February, received the temporalities of the diocese on 4 May, and was consecrated by Archbishop Chichele at Canterbury on 18 August 1426.²

William Gray died on 11 February 1436. On 1 March the *cong  d' lire* was issued to the dean and chapter.³ The chapter had little choice, but they may well have been pleased, in the absence of the dean, to confirm the king's choice of a man who had at least some knowledge of the cathedral's problems. They duly elected William Alnwick on 30 April.⁴ Signification of the royal assent to his postulation was sent to the pope on 23 May.⁵ Alnwick was translated by the pope on 19 September,⁶ and received his temporalities on 16 February 1437.⁷ The process of translation was complete.

Although this was all the procedure needed for the bishop to start exercising his authority, he was not considered to have entered residence until he had been properly installed in his cathedral church. This enthronement was, in the southern province, the jealously guarded prerogative of the archdeacon of Canterbury,

1. See *ibid.*, pp 356-63; and Davies, 'Martin V and the English Episcopate', pp 330-1.

2. *HBC*, p 243.

3. *CPR*, 1429-36, p 511.

4. The note of his election in the chapter acts was probably made by the bishop himself. The hand is certainly the same as that, described as Alnwick's, which records his installation (LAO: A 2/32, f 116).

5. *CPR*, 1429-36, p 506. This reveals that Macworth was absent from the election. See also Appendix III, p 381.

6. *CPL*, vol. VIII, p 612.

7. *CPR*, 1436-41, p 38.

although he usually deputed the prior or dean of the cathedral to perform the ceremony.¹ The length of time taken between consecration or translation and enthronement varied, but Alnwick, doubtless because of his political commitments, delayed somewhat longer than usual before coming to Norwich.² He was finally installed in his cathedral church on Monday 22 December 1427, in time to preside over the Christmas solemnities.³ His register records no information beyond the date of the event but it is probably safe to assume that the ceremony was performed by the new prior, William Worsted, and was followed by customary festivities in chapter and city.⁴

We can have a more precise idea of the events surrounding Alnwick's installation at Lincoln. This time he proceeded to his cathedral city within six weeks of receiving his temporalities. With his own hand he wrote in the chapter acts: '*hic scripsit W. Alnewyk episcopus qui fuit installatus Lincoln' die cere domini set occupavit in episcopatu prius quia vacacio duravit per unum annum tantum*'.⁵ In choosing to be enthroned on Maundy Thursday (28 March 1437), he followed the precedent he had set of entering his cathedral city at the time of a major festival.⁶ There is no contemporary account of the ceremony but within four years Alnwick was to describe in his *Novum Registrum*⁷ the correct procedure for an enthronement and it seems highly likely that his description was closely based on his own experience.

After a night in the small priory of St. Katherine, which was in the bishop's patronage, the bishop, surrounded by the clergy of

1. Davies, Ph.D., pp 19-20.

2. *Ibid.*, pp 512-13.

3. Norw. Reg., f 9.

4. *The Records of the City of Norwich*, ed. W. Hudson and J.C. Tingey, 2 vols (1905-10), vol. II, pp 68-70 record the expenses of the city at the time of the installation of Alnwick's successor.

5. LAO: A 2/32, f 121v.

6. According to Davies (Ph.D., p 514), it was normal for enthronements to take place in the first quarter of the year or in the autumn.

7. *LCS*, vol. III, pp 273-4. This follows the Black Book (*ibid.*, vol. I, p 273) closely.

the city, proceeded in bare feet to the cathedral close. From the gate of the close to the west door of the cathedral, he walked on grey or white cloth, which was later distributed to the poor. At the door he was met, to the sound of the ringing of all the bells, by the dean and all the choir dressed in silken copes.¹ He was then led in procession by the dean on his right hand and the next greatest dignitary present on his left to the altar, accompanied by the singing of responses chosen for the occasion by the precentor. There the bishop lay prostrate while the dean or senior dignitary present said the accustomed prayers. Then, rising, the bishop kissed the corner of the altar and touching the gospels swore an oath of fidelity to the church of Lincoln and its statutes. Next, having had his feet washed and his pontifical vestments put on in the vestibule,² he was led by the senior dignitary present to his stall where, after the reading of his bulls of provision, he was installed by the archdeacon of Canterbury's representative.³ Then the canons came to him in order of seniority greeting him with a fraternal kiss. Finally, the bishop celebrated his first high mass in the cathedral.

What kind of men were they who made up the chapters that received their new bishop with such ceremony? The monks of the Norwich cathedral priory have not yet been studied as a group.⁴ The new prior, William Worsted, was a man of some eminence, a doctor of theology and, later, one of the ambassadors of the English church to the council of Basle.⁵ Nothing is known of his

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1. At this point in the text there is a contemporary note in the margin to the effect that the bishop has omitted the promise he was supposed to make here to observe the cathedral's statutes (*LCS*, vol. III, p 273).
 2. Presumably *lotis pedibus* means that the bishop's feet were washed, although bearing in mind that Alnwick was installed on Maundy Thursday, it is not unlikely that he also washed the feet of his brethren at some point in the service.
 3. The archdeacon of Canterbury at this time was Master Thomas Chichele who was also a canon of Lincoln and prebendary of Aylesbury (*Fasti* IV, p 8; *Fasti* I, p 26). It is not inconceivable that he installed Alnwick personally.
 4. *Fasti* IV, identifies only the priors, but Saunders, *Obedientiary Rolls*, pp 197-8 has listed those holding positions as obedientiaries.
 5. *BRVO*, vol. III, pp 2089-90.

subprior except for his Christian name, Thomas.¹ Several of the monks are known to have been graduates,² and it is clear from the obedientiary rolls that several scholars were supported at Oxford during this period.³ It is almost certain that, whatever their academic qualifications, the dozen or so 'elders' of the cathedral were able administrators.

By contrast, the Lincoln canons are much more easily identified, as their collations and installations are recorded in the episcopal registers and chapter acts.⁴ Many of them were entirely non-resident, using their prebends to support them in service to the king or some other lord. There was, however, a core of some eight to ten residentiaries, around whom the life of the chapter revolved. Chief among these, of course, was the dean, John Macworth. The next two most senior dignitaries were Precentor Robert Burton and Chancellor Peter Partrich. Both were theologians, and had, like Worsted, spent some time at the council of Basle.⁵ The treasurer, John Haget, was nearing the end of a long term of office and was, perhaps, past his best. The subdean, John Percy, served in that capacity for some forty years. The other canons most constantly resident were John Southam and William Derby, archdeacons of Oxford and Bedford, who were foremost among Macworth's opponents, and John Marshall and Richard Ingoldesby, both canons of very long standing who were later to quarrel over precedence. Of these, Burton, who had been away for so long, and

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1. The bishop instituted a number of people to benefices at the presentation of Brother Thomas, subprior, and the chapter, in the prior's absence in 1432-34 (Norw. Reg., ff 59, 63, 64v, 69v, etc.).
 2. E.g. John Derham, prior of Bishop's Lynn; and John Fornesete, who accompanied Worsted to Basle, and is thus perhaps a more likely candidate for the authorship of Ms. 142 at Emmanuel College, Cambridge than John Stowe (*BRVO*, vol. I, p 572; vol. II, p 707; vol. III, p 1794).
 3. NRO: DCN 1, *passim*. See also Saunders, *Obedientiary Rolls*, pp 184-5.
 4. See Appendix IV for a list of the canons of the period. *Fasti* I, contains numerous errors. For their careers see *BRUC* and *BRVO*, *passim*; and also *Visitations* I, pp 172-214.
 5. Burton was there for four years (See A.N.E.D. Schofield 'The First English Delegation to the Council of Basel', *JEH*, vol. XII (1961), pp 167-96).

Marshall, possibly Macworth's only supporter, seem to have been the odd men out. Bishop Alnwick was to encounter a group of able men who had grown entrenched in their positions through many years of working and quarrelling together. As an outsider, his was to be no easy task.

The bishop's first formal encounter with his cathedral chapter after his enthronement was traditionally at the start of his primary visitation of the diocese. Possibly because of his preoccupation with royal government and heresy,¹ William Alnwick delayed his primary visitation of Norwich until nearly two years after his installation. However, on 11 August 1429, while at his manor at Thorpe, Alnwick wrote to inform the prior and chapter of his intention to commence his ordinary visitation, as was proper, in the cathedral's chapter house on 25 August.² Evidently, Alnwick did not expect to encounter many problems as, at the same time, he arranged to visit the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields on 27 August, giving himself only two days to attend to the cathedral.³ No record of the events of this visitation survives.⁴ It is tempting, if dangerous, to assume that this indicates that the condition of Norwich cathedral priory was satisfactory.

There is no such danger when considering Bishop Alnwick's primary visitation of Lincoln cathedral.⁵ The initial sessions

1. See below, pp 200-3, 239-41, 287-307.

2. Norw. Reg., f 100.

3. *Ibid.*, f 101v. If necessary, the visitation could, of course, have been continued at a later date.

4. Bishop Goldwell's visitation of the cathedral in 1492-3 is probably representative of the procedure followed (*Visitations of the Diocese of Norwich*, ed. Jessopp, pp 1-10). Goldwell's re-affirmation of the injunctions of Bishop Bateman (1346-7) would seem to confirm the view that nothing major was undertaken in fifteenth-century visitations (see Cheney, 'Norwich Cathedral Priory', p 93).

5. LAO: Vj 2 has lost folios 1-2, and thus the description of the opening of the visitation. Folio 3 commences with its continuation in January 1438. However, the complaints aired in October 1437 are recorded on folios 5-19. For the procedure he would have followed, see the description of the visitation by Bishop Gray in 1432 (*Visitations I*, pp 128-137).

lasted from 1 to 8 October 1437, and during those days the bishop received the complaints of the dean and canons.¹ The bishop heard the evidence of thirteen canons. Eleven of these were residentiaries: the five dignitaries; John Southam, William Lassells and William Derby, the archdeacons of Oxford, Huntingdon and Bedford; and prebendaries John Marshall, Richard Ingoldesby, and Thomas Warde. In addition, two non-resident canons, Thomas Petham and John Depyng, the bishop's chancellor, also made submissions. From 3 to 8 October, Master Robert Thornton, his official, heard the evidence of the vicars choral and lesser ministers.²

Complaints against Dean Macworth poured forth from practically all his brethren. These ranged from the serious to the seemingly trivial. He had failed to adhere to the terms of the awards of Bishops Gray and Fleming. He was accused of ignoring the customs of the church by neglecting both to feast the choir on the appropriate days and to contribute to obit distributions. He failed to reside and went beyond the terms of his papal dispensation by demanding a share in distributions enjoyed only by residentiaries. He also failed both to provide a vicar to replace him in the choir and to pay the septism owed by all non-resident canons. Despite this non-residence he disallowed acts of the chapter made in his absence. Conversely, he frequently acted without them, opening letters addressed jointly to the dean and chapter while alone, failing to appoint the requisite canons to assist him in his visitations, and making decisions which needed the consent of both dean and chapter. When he was resident he often failed to attend chapter meetings, thus preventing the accomplishment of necessary business; and when he did call

1. LAO: Vj 2, ff 5-12.

2. *Ibid.*, ff 12v-19. The complaints voiced by all parties at this visitation were first described by A.R. Maddison, 'A Visitation of Lincoln Cathedral Held by William Alnwick, Bishop of Lincoln, A.D. 1437', *Transactions of the British Archaeological Association* (1891), pp 12-24. Hamilton Thompson (*Eng. Clergy*, p 91) was unable to locate this paper. The text of both sets of complaints is printed in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 366-92 (canons) and pp 392-415 (*ministri inferiores*).

meetings, it was at inconvenient times and for frivolous reasons. Without their consent he had torn down part of the cloister and built himself a stable. He was accused of impeding the provost and lay sacrist in the pursuance of their duties; and he had, against the rules of the cathedral, commandeered one of the three keys to the common seal. His former violence against Partrich was mentioned by a couple of canons, although not, surprisingly, by Partrich himself. Finally, and perhaps closest to Alnwick's heart, Macworth was accused of usurping the bishop's jurisdiction by continuing to act in disciplinary and probate matters after the bishop's inhibition for the period of the visitation had been received.

The chapter did not have it all their own way. The dean, supported in some points by John Marshall and, to a lesser extent, by Precentor Burton, had counter-accusations. Canons, instead of providing their own chaplains to serve in the choir, were using vicars choral and chantry chaplains for this purpose. A small group was excluding not only the dean but also other residentiaries from their deliberations. Macworth and Marshall both complained about the dispensation that had been given to William Derby to receive his commons while serving the king in London.¹ By contrast, Robert Burton complained that he had not been similarly treated during his absence in Basle, despite proclamations of the ecumenical council in support of its delegates.² The chapter's actions would indeed seem to smack of favouritism.

Many of the complaints levelled against the chapter and its individual members concerned financial and administrative mismanagement. They failed to collect rents and appropriated the common fund for private suits of court and to make private loans to the king. Meanwhile they neglected to provide for and support chantry priests. John Depyng, who seems to have been fairly

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1. He was a baron of the exchequer.
 2. In fact, on 20 December 1432, a chapter meeting had decreed that he and Partrich should be treated as if in major residence during their absence at the council of Basle. (LAO: A 2/32, f 67).

impartial, complained that the neglect of the fabric of the churches belonging to the common fund meant that only the most inept of incumbents could be attracted.¹

The favouritism shown to Derby and the names of the canons criticising the dean seem to confirm Macworth's contention that Partrich, Southam, Haget, Derby, Warde, and Ingoldesby were in league against him. John Marshall's numerous criticisms of Peter Partrich included the accusation that in Corpus Christi week 1435² Partrich had treated the dean with discourtesy by causing the bell-ringing at vespers to be stopped before Macworth had entered the choir. On being called before the dean, he had incurred excommunication through his contumacy. He had then insisted on taking his place in the choir despite this excommunication and had even gone so far as to intrude on the dean's stall. This admittedly prejudiced account perhaps provides some explanation for the violent action of Macworth and his servants.

John Depyng's complaint that the disputes between dean and chapter were bad for cathedral discipline is endorsed by the accusations levelled at the vicars choral and poor clerks.³ They wandered in and out of the choir and cathedral during services, sometimes even visiting taverns during services, and being frequently there at other times. They failed to live in community and did not bother to learn their 'histories'. One John Skinner was noted for adultery and neglect of his chantry, and Robert Boy was accused of holding his chantry without proper title. Partrich complained that the three senior vicars, the sacrist (John Leke), the vice chancellor (William Grantham) and the succentor demanded more ceremonial meals than was their due.⁴ Burton had a long list

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1. He also asked that the chapter should accede to the old custom whereby canons not normally resident received 12d a day for the days when they were resident as, he claimed, he often was.
 2. Corpus Christi was 16 June in 1435, less than a fortnight before the dean's attack.
 3. These are very like contemporary complaints about the vicars choral of York Minster (Dobson, 'The Later Middle Ages', p 91).
 4. Dobson (*ibid.*, p 92) remarks that 'what always seems to have peturbed the vicars choral most was the loss of their statutory rights to food at the tables of the residentiary canons'.

of complaints against John Leke: he overstepped his papal dispensation by hearing confessions outside his jurisdiction, and it was rumoured that he seduced women during confession; he held incompatible benefices and neglected not only his chantry but also the duties of his office.

The ninety-four *ministri inferiores*, who were interviewed between 3 and 8 October by Robert Thornton,¹ confirmed the sad state of affairs reported by the canons.² Their major complaint was of the irregularity of payment of stipends and customary distributions and the failure to provide ceremonial meals, both by the chapter and by individual canons. It is clear that many of them felt themselves to be very hard done by. The dignitary most complained of was the treasurer, John Haget. He was accused of allowing vestments to fall into disrepair; demanding excessive money for the necessities for mass; failing to provide sufficient lights; and providing a communion wine of such poor quality that it induced vomiting in the ministers of the altar. It was not only the canons who were criticised. The senior vicars complained also of the ill discipline of their juniors, whose misdeeds ranged from the insufficiency of their titles to wrestling and incontinence.

In all, the condition of the cathedral close and its inhabitants, both spiritual and physical, was pretty poor. Clearly the chapter was greatly divided. Personal quarrels, exacerbated by, and contributing to, the cathedral's financial ills, threatened both the livelihood of the *ministri inferiores* and the very fabric of the cathedral. A number of the more perspicacious ministers echoed the judgement of Canons Depyng and Southam that there was little hope of improvement until the divisions within the chapter

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1. I.e. thirty-six vicars choral, twenty-five chantry chaplains, four chaplains serving residentiary canons, ten poor clerks, eight choristers, four vergers, three bell-ringers, the clerk of St Peter's Altar, the rector of St Mary Magdalene and the janitor of the close. The occupation of Thomas Lowe is not revealed (LAO: Vj 2, ff 12v-19; LCS, vol. III, pp 392-415). There does not seem to have been any submission by John Tylney, the keeper of St Peter's altar and the chapter's official.
 2. Although, astonishingly, fifteen of them claimed that '*omnia bene*'.

were healed. Maddison was probably right in his judgement that 'the house was falling down because divided against itself'.

This first week of October 1437 accordingly left Bishop Alnwick with an enormous amount of material to work on. He seems to have prorogued the visitation until after Christmas, perhaps hoping that the atmosphere would improve in that time. On 14 January 1438, Alnwick received further depositions from the dean and canons.² On 18 January, the bishop addressed the assembled dean and chapter about his grief at his failure to make peace between the parties '*quis est in culpa, novit Deus, non ignoratis*'. He then called for the *detecta* and *comperta* of the visitation to be read. At this point it seems that further depositions were added to those he had already received,³ including the first of many complaints from Precentor Burton about the chapter's usurpation of his right to provide a choirmaster.⁴ On 21 and 22 January, Bishop Alnwick delivered the *comperta* to all implicated parties, giving them until Tuesday 11 March to reply.⁵

Several notes added to the various articles of complaint reveal the bishop's mind at work. Beside the dean's complaint that rents for houses in the city belonging to the common and fabric funds were not collected is written '*possint providere*'.⁶ Beside Burton's accusation that the sacrist neglected his duties is the note '*fiat declaracio in quo vel in quibus*'.⁷ Robert Boy, who had no title to his chantry, and Simon Darcy, who though illegitimate had no dispensation to holy orders, were to be '*vocetur coram domino*'.⁸ The complaint of Burton that the chapter did not divide

1. 'A Visitation', p 23.

2. LAO: Vj 2, ff 3, 20-1. Complaints of the *ministri inferiores* against Precentor Burton and of the chaplains of the fabric chantry concerning their stipends are of a similar period (*ibid.*, f 19); LCS, vol. III, pp 416-22.

3. LAO: Vj 2, ff 21v-22; LCS, vol. III, pp 422-5.

4. On 14 October 1437, the dean and chapter had chosen Richard Ingoldesby as master and supervisor '*domus choristarum*' (LAO: A 2/32, f 125v).

5. Vj 2, f 3.

6. *Ibid.*, f 5.

7. *Ibid.*, f 6.

8. *Ibid.*, ff 13, 17v.

the commons among them according to custom is accompanied by the note '*deliberet dominus de isto articulo*'.¹ The articles accompanied by the simple note '*injuncio*' would seem to be those that the bishop found least difficult to deal with. These included Derby's complaint that the masters of the fabric were failing to repair the fabric or provide for chantry chaplains;² and the complaints of the *ministri inferiores* about the chapter not employing craftsmen, the non-payment of stipends and distributions,³ the failure to entertain the choir on feast days,⁴ the removal of books from their proper places,⁵ the poor repair of the church,⁶ noisy behaviour and absence during services,⁷ and the treasurer's provision of foul wine.⁸

By March,⁹ it was clear that, despite all Bishop Alnwick's efforts, the chapter was incapable of making its own peace.¹⁰ Consequently, after much discussion, it was agreed on 13 March that the bishop should arbitrate.¹¹ It seems that Alnwick was invited not merely to judge the problems that had been revealed during his visitation but also to study both the Black Book and Fleming's

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1. *Ibid.*, f 6.
 2. *Ibid.*, f 10.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 12v, 13, 13v, 14, 14v, 15.
 4. *Ibid.*, f 13v.
 5. *Ibid.*, f 14v.
 6. *Ibid.*, ff 13v, 14, 15.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 14v, 15, 17v.
 8. *Ibid.*, f 13v. The articles with '*per laudum*' written by them seem to be those that were dealt with by the bishop's 1439 award.
 9. LAO: Vj 2, f 3v. Much of the narrative contained in ff 3-4v is summarised, not always accurately, in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 364-6.
 10. Alnwick's attempts throughout this period to encourage the chapter to settle their own disputes illustrate his very real appreciation of the ecclesiastical judge's obligations to encourage compromise wherever possible (Cf. E. Powell, 'Arbitration and the Law in England in the Late Middle Ages', *TRHS*, 5th series, vol. XXXIII (1983), pp 49-67, especially pp 53-4).
 11. There was another week of argument before recognisances were agreed on.

award to elucidate the true nature of the cathedral's statutes.¹ During the next fortnight, the bishop attempted to deal with individual matters, concentrating in the main on the complaints of and about the treasurer and the precentor. His reply to Burton's assertion that he was not obliged by the Black Book to provide as many ceremonial meals as claimed by the *ministri* is particularly interesting. Alnwick considered these meals were part of a necessary courtesy, '*ex curialitate*', which was in its way more important than the law.² Finally, on 28 March, having exhorted the chapter both to resolve their dispute with Burton over the master of the choristers and to make peace between the precentor and the sacrist, Bishop Alnwick prorogued the visitation until 25 June.³ At this point he seems to have retired to the comparative peace of London.

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1. Unfortunately the text is very difficult at this point and it is not easy to sort out exactly what was being agreed to. Wordsworth (p 365) does not even attempt an interpretation. However, it does seem certain that the canons were prepared to allow Alnwick at least to interpret the cathedral's statutes and customs, if not to introduce his own ordinances.
 2. LAO: Vj 2, f 4v.
 - 3.. *Ibid.*, f 24; LCS, vol. III, pp 425-6.

3. William Alnwick and the Disputes and Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral, 1438-1449; his *Laudum* and *Novum Registrum*.¹

On 23 May 1438, Bishop Alnwick wrote to remind the chapter of Lincoln cathedral of their undertaking to submit their articles for his consideration by 24 June.² Two weeks later,³ the canons residentiary sealed their submission to the bishop. Their *compromissio*⁴ recorded that since Bishop Fleming's award (1421) '*suggerente inimico humani generis*', a number of scandalous dissensions had arisen amongst them. The forty-two clauses directed against the dean not only repeated many of the accusations that had been made during Alnwick's primary visitation but also raised a number of new complaints.⁵ Particularly important among these accusations were those relating to Macworth's failure to observe earlier episcopal awards. He completely refused to observe Bishop Gray's award despite swearing to do so, and he also failed to observe those articles agreed on in the presence of Lord Cromwell. Despite his acceptance of the authority of Fleming's award, he was also accused of failing to observe its rulings on a number of points.

In addition to their complaints against Macworth, the chapter submitted several other items for Alnwick's consideration. These related to their disciplinary problems with the *ministri inferiores*, the decay of the cathedral's fabric and jurisdictional disagreements. Finally, they asked the bishop to resolve ambiguities and difficulties in the awards of Fleming and earlier

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1. The best, if incomplete, account of these events is *Eng. Clergy*, pp 90-98.
 2. LAO: A 2/32, f 128v.
 3. On either 7 June (*LCS*, vol. III, p 197; *Laudum*, p 78) or 8 June (*Linc. Reg.*, f 13). The 7th, a Saturday, is more likely. The text of the award and the preceding submissions are in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 187-228 and *Linc. Reg.*, ff 8-19v. For the sake of simplicity all references will be to the appropriate pages of *Laudum*.
 4. *Laudum*, pp 54-79.
 5. It is worth noting that both Burton, who did not appear a particular opponent of the dean, and Marshall, who was his fervent supporter at the beginning of the visitation, put their names to these complaints.

bishops '*quam eciam in libro dicte ecclesie consuetudinario sive registro aut statutis, interpretacione exposicione et declaracione; superque contrariorum, superfluum atque illorum que, contrario rationabili et legitimo usu, aut contrariis posterioribus statutis in dissuetudinem abierunt, vel revocate sunt, si que reperiantur, resecacione et evacuacione a libro Registr' et statut' predict', omnium et singulorum premissorum incidentibus et dependentibus.*'¹ It appears that the residentiaries were giving the bishop authority not only to arbitrate but also to give the statutes and customs of the cathedral the complete overhaul that he was to attempt in his *Novum Registrum*.

On 16 June, John Macworth sealed his submission containing his list of fourteen complaints against the chapter. He also gave Alnwick authority to pronounce on ambiguities in Fleming's award and remove contradictions and superfluous items from the cathedral's customs and statutes, but without giving him the same blanket power granted by the chapter.² Macworth's promise to abide by the arbitration was dependent on his being given the opportunity to confirm his approval of it before it was formally promulgated. Dean and chapter had provided Alnwick with an enormous task; it was to be another year before they would receive the results of his deliberations.

After a period in which, as the chapter acts reveal, relations within the chapter continued to be strained,³ Bishop Alnwick

1. *Laudum*, p 72.

2. *Laudum*, pp 82-97 for the dean's submission. The passage on statutes (p 90) says '*Necnon super ambiguum dubiorum et obscuritatum tam in prefati Domini Ricardi laudo, quam eciam in libro dicte ecclesie consuetudinario sive Registro, aut Statutis, interpretacione exposicione et declaracione; ipso tamen Laudo in sui essentialibus et substancialibus illibato et illeso manente, de quo protestor; Superque contrariorum superfluum, atque illorum que contrario rationabili et legitimo usu, aut contrariis posterioribus statutis in dissuetudinem abierunt, vel revocate sunt, si que reperiantur, reservacione et evacuacione a libro registro et statutis predictis omniumque et singulorum premissorum incidentibus et dependentibus*'.

3. LAO: A 2/32, ff 130-5; A 2/33, f 8.

summoned a full chapter of all the cathedral canons both resident and non-resident. This 'convocation' opened in the chapter house on 8 June 1439. Present were John Macworth, the dean, Peter Partrich, the chancellor, John Haget, the treasurer, John Percy, the subdean, John Southam, archdeacon of Oxford, William Lassels, archdeacon of Huntingdon, John Marshall, Richard Ingoldesby, and Thomas Warde, the residentiary canons who comprised the chapter, together with the non-resident canons John Langton, John Depyng, Alan Humberston, and Thomas Ludham, and Robert Thornton, archdeacon of Bedford, several of them acting as proctors for absent canons. Following the bishop's blessing, Thomas Duffeld, bachelor of theology,¹ set the atmosphere of the convocation with a sermon based on the theme '*ponam visitacionem tuam pacem*'.² The significance which Bishop Alnwick attached to this convocation is indicated by the fact that those who had not appointed proctors, including Thomas Beckington, archdeacon of Buckingham, a man he probably knew well, were declared to be contumacious.³

On the next day, Alnwick declared the purpose of this convocation. The first reason was so all the canons might confirm his award. Secondly, he noted that despite the Black Book's primacy, there were a number of written and unwritten statutes whose authority was unclear and thus subject to dissension. He therefore suggested that they consent to the composition of a definitive statute book.⁴ Finally, and, he said, most importantly, was the fact that the cathedral, built by his predecessors for the glory of God, was through neglect, in urgent need of repair. The canons consented to his plans with varying degrees of

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1. See below, p 131..
 2. LAO: Vj 2, f 35. Leaves 35-36v are transcribed almost fully in LCS, vol. III, pp 427-38.
 3. Beckington's proctor appeared on 11 June (Vj 2, f 36v; LCS, vol. III, pp 437-8).
 4. For another example of an episcopal visitation resulting in a complete overhaul of a church's statutes, see Archbishop Arundel's visitation of Beverley Minster in 1391 (M. Aston, '*Thomas Arundel*', pp 289-92). Injunctions produced as a result of visitations had statutory power of course.

enthusiasm' and the bishop prorogued the convocation until 3 October 1440.²

It was, however, on 23 June 1439 that Bishop Alnwick actually presented his long-awaited award to the residentiary canons.³ His *Laudum*, consisting of forty articles, was a masterpiece of balance. It instructed deans to observe their responsibilities as prebendaries and to act in concert with the chapter. Conversely, the canons were to respect the dean's authority. Almost all the individual complaints were responded to by rulings which emphasised the canons' duty to observe the church's regulations and to attend to the financial and moral well-being of the *ministri inferiores*. Alnwick clearly accepted the legitimate complaints of the chapter against Macworth but he did not act with blind favouritism. On a major point he supported Macworth. He declared that Gray's award had been made without sufficient authority, and should therefore be regarded as null and void. While confirming Fleming's award, he also clarified some of its ambiguities.

Having done his best to settle the parties' differences equitably and to improve the quality of the cathedral's fabric and ministers, Bishop Alnwick attempted to ensure the observation and survival of his award. Immediately after its promulgation all the present dean and chapter were to swear to uphold it as were any new residentiaries as they entered residence. Henceforth all canons were to swear on admission to observe it. To give this oath more bite, he added that any dean or canon acting contrary to the award was to pay £20 to the cathedral's fabric fund, a penalty clause that was confirmed by the parliament of the winter of 1439-40.⁴ Lest there be any doubt, he reserved to himself and future bishops the power to interpret the award.

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1. In particular, Macworth insisted that the new book should not derogate from the authority of either the Black Book or Fleming's award.
 2. LAO: Vj 2, ff 35-6; LCS, vol. III, pp 430-7.
 3. *Laudum*, pp 97-149. The dean, Burton, Partrich, Haget, Southam, Lassells, Percy, Marshall, Ingoldesby and Warde were present.
 4. *RP*, vol. V, p 10.

An enormous amount of thought and work had gone into the making of this award. The bishop appears to have studied the complaints of both parties and to have examined carefully any written customs or statutes that had caused dissension. There is no sign of prejudice for or against any party, and his real concern for the quality of both the fabric of the cathedral and its lesser ministers is patent. It was a tribute to his painstaking efforts that the award was accepted without argument by all those who received it. The *Laudum* was sealed at Nettleham on 29 June 1439, and since then all new canons have sworn on admission to observe it. Neither recalcitrant deans nor revolutions in church or realm have dislodged it from its position at the centre of the constitution of Lincoln cathedral.¹

William Alnwick's attempt to settle the differences of dean and chapter had been supremely successful. Whether he would be so successful in repairing the spiritual and physical fabric of the cathedral and in codifying its statutes remained to be seen. With hindsight, he might have preferred to have stopped there in his work on the cathedral statutes, but in 1439 the portents were good. He had obtained the consent of the complete body of the canons resident and non-resident to his attempt and their acceptance of the *Laudum* was an occasion for some optimism.

On 3 October 1440, the convocation of bishop, residentiaries and non-resident canons was resumed in the chapter house.² Alnwick announced that after much work he had nearly completed the statute book, proceeding to read out part of it. He suggested that, because the book concerned many who were absent, it should be considered by a sub-committee of those who were present who might amend it as necessary. Four days later, he handed over a completed copy of his *Novum Registrum* to Robert Stretton, clerk of the

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1. Bradshaw traced the continuity of oaths to observe the *Laudum* until the late nineteenth century in *LCS*, vol. I, pp 11-27. I am grateful to Nicholas Bennett, archivist of the dean and chapter of Lincoln, for the information that the traditional oath still continues.
 2. LAO: Vj 2, ff 36v-7; *LCS*, vol. III, pp 443-7.

chapter, instructing him to make copies as requested at the expense of those requiring them. They now had until April 1441 to study his suggestions before making their response.

The *Novum Registrum*¹ was not, as has been stated,² inspired by the success of Alnwick's *Laudum*. The idea of codifying the cathedral's statutes had been in the air since the revelation, at the time of Alnwick's primary visitation, that the complete disorder which existed in the cathedral was at least partly due to the conflicting nature of its ruling ordinances. Both dean and chapter had requested that he should consider the conflicts and anomalies they contained, and had confirmed their willingness to accept such a new statute book as he could produce out of the mass of material. Perhaps what they hoped for was merely a tidying up of the Black Book and subsidiary customaries, ordinances and statutes. They may have accepted his excision of a few out-of-date or contradictory customs and rulings. What he produced was a completely new book which, while it certainly encompassed Lincoln cathedral's customs, owed most of its inspiration to the statute book of St Paul's cathedral, London.

This book, compiled by Dean Baldock of London in the fourteenth century, was the only book of its kind in existence.³ Alnwick may well have known it since his time as a canon of St Paul's, or it may simply have been famous as the clearest and most complete book of cathedral statutes in existence in England. William Alnwick adopted the complete skeleton of Baldock's five books, even transcribing word for word 'whole passages, sections, chapters and even prefaces, and attempting on the groundwork to incorporate

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1. The text of the copy held by Corpus Christi College, Cambridge (part 57 of Ms. 108) is transcribed in *LCS*, vol. III, pp 268-363.
 2. By, for example, E. Venables, 'William Alnwick' *DNB*, vol. I (1885), pp 343-5. Hamilton Thompson (*Eng. Clergy*, pp 94-5) is more subtle but his version carries similar implications.
 3. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, p 25 gives a clear exposition of its value and influence on Alnwick. She also suggests ('Salisbury Cathedral', p 173) that Salisbury cathedral's statutes had some influence on his compilation. Cf. *Eng. Clergy*, p 97.

whatever was characteristic of Lincoln'.¹

In his preface,² Bishop Alnwick explained the background to his composition, which would, he hoped, bring together all the worthy and ancient customs of the church, clarify ambiguities and produce new rules for anything not yet covered by statute or arbitration. The result of his work was the '*unum corpus... quam "Novum Ecclesie Lincolnienensis Registrum" decrevimus appellandum*'. His preface concludes with a description of the book's five parts, copying almost word for word the description given in the same section of the St Paul's statutes.³

The first section relates the history of the foundation of the cathedral by Bishop Remigius, and goes on to describe the roles of the '*personae*' of the cathedral: the bishop, the five dignitaries and the eight archdeacons. Contained in his description of the bishop's role⁴ was a riposte, deliberate or not, to Macworth's objections to Alnwick's planned visitation of the prebends.⁵ Alnwick declared that the bishop may visit the prebendal churches and instruct the dean and chapter to correct faults; but, he added, only the bishop had power to correct the prebendal vicars because of their institution by, and oaths of canonical obedience to, him. In his description of the dignity of the dean,⁶ Alnwick clearly emphasised the dean's duty to act in co-operation with the chapter. He also laid considerable stress on the fact that the bishop, not the dean, was the head of the church. His accounts of the office and power of the precentor and chancellor,⁷ treasurer,⁸ the eight archdeacons, who were listed in order of precedence,⁹ and the

1. Edwards, *Secular Cathedral*, p 25. The transcript of the *Novum Registrum* in LCS includes some notes of comparison with Baldock's book.

2. LCS, vol. III, pp 268-71.

3. So says LCS, vol. III, p 271.

4. LCS, vol. III, pp 272-8.

5. See below, pp 51-2.

6. LCS, vol. III, pp 279-97.

7. *Ibid.*, pp 298-301.

8. *Ibid.*, pp 302-5.

9. *Ibid.*, p 306. There is a marginal note that he was wrong to place Lincoln above Northampton.

subdean,¹ were a good deal less detailed and, perhaps, less contentious. Alnwick concluded part one by listing the prebends, the psalms attached to their holders and their *taxacio*.²

Part two of the *Novum Registrum* relates to the '*canonicorum ingressu et installacione, et communiter pertinentibus ad eosdem*',³ stressing, in its description of the methods of installing canons and dignitaries, their oaths to observe, among other statutes, Alnwick's own *Laudum* and *Novum Registrum*. The third section, relating to '*canonicorum progressu per residentiam corporalem et ministerii ecclesiastici prosecucionem*',⁴ describes not only the method of entering into residence and the responsibilities of residentiary canons, but also the role of their weekly chapter meetings. Having described the part the canons had to play in the life of the cathedral, Alnwick went on, in the fourth section, to the methods by which they might leave it.⁵ His vision of the great care with which the dying were to be eased into the next world with the aid of the sacraments and obsequies is in striking contrast to the acrimonious relations which obtained in the cathedral, particularly at the time he was writing.

Finally, Alnwick devoted the fifth section of his *Novum Registrum* to the *ministri inferiores*,⁶ stressing both their material and disciplinary needs.⁷ Evidently he believed that communal living could assist in the maintenance of good discipline, as he confirmed current practice by advocating it for vicars, clerks and choristers. It may well have been as a result of his support that the vicars choral received a formal charter of

1. *Ibid.*, p 307.

2. *Ibid.*, pp 307-11. The bishop was allocated Psalm one. It is not entirely clear what the *taxacio prebendarum* related to, perhaps the valuation of 1291. The *LCS* transcript of this section of the manuscript is not altogether accurate.

3. *Ibid.*, pp 312-22.

4. *Ibid.*, pp 322-41.

5. *Ibid.*, pp 342-6.

6. *Ibid.*, pp 346-63.

7. They were to be deprived of their posts if found guilty of incontinence and backsliding three times.

incorporation at this time.' The *Novum Registrum* concludes with a memorandum on the foundation of the hospital of St Giles for the poor. Alnwick's continuing concern for the fabric of the cathedral is indicated by his concession of forty days' indulgence to penitents contributing to it.

The *Novum Registrum* is, all in all, a remarkably lucid document and, together with the *Laudum*, a monument to the legislative abilities of its author. It contained in all probability a pretty true picture of the customs of Lincoln cathedral. It was not, however, what the Lincoln cathedral community was used to. It was rather full of '*ordinamus*' and '*statuimus*', words too autocratic for a group of dignitaries ever eager to protect their privileges. The limitations attached by Alnwick to the dean's exercise of authority may not have been new but their clear presentation was probably too much for John Macworth, the '*superbus decanus*'.²

After an adjournment of just over six months, Bishop Alnwick's convocation reopened in the chapter house on 24 April 1441.³ Present were the dean, all the residentiary canons, except Warde for whom Partrich stood proxy, and the non-resident canons John Depyng, Peter Irford, Thomas Ludham, John Proctor, Alan Kyrketon and John Leek.⁴ Alnwick asked his companions if they were content with his statute book. He met complete opposition from Dean Macworth, who claimed, quite untruthfully, that he had never consented to the book's compilation, and from Precentor Burton, who was not comforted by the bishop's reassurance that he did not intend to overturn the Black Book. At length, it was agreed that the convocation should be adjourned to enable Alnwick to amend his book as necessary. At the adjournment, Canon Peter Irford renewed the suggestion⁵ that a sub-committee of both residentiary and

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1. As Maddison, '*Vicars Choral*', p 10, suggests. The vicars choral of Salisbury and York had been incorporated, respectively, in 1409 (Edwards, '*Salisbury Cathedral*', p 179) and 1421 (Dobson, '*The Later Middle Ages*', p 90).
 2. Gascoigne's description of him (*Locí e Libro*, p 153).
 3. LAO: Vj 2, ff 37v-8; LCS, vol. III, pp 450-3.
 4. The bishop's commissary and canon, not the sacrist.
 5. Made originally by the bishop. See above, p 43.

non-residentiary canons should be formed to examine the book and refer suggested amendments to the bishop. All concurred, and it was decided that the residentiary canons Burton, Partrich, Ingoldesby and Marshall should be joined in this work by the non-resident canon, John Depyng.

After nearly a year, there met together on 9 April 1442 Macworth, Burton, Partrich, Percy, Ingoldesby, Marshall and a new residentiary canon, Thomas Ryngstede, who acted as commissary for the bishop who was absent.¹ Ryngstede, a favourite of Alnwick's since the latter's episcopate at Norwich, had received collation of the prebend of Brampton in 1440.² It would thus seem that the bishop had at last placed one of his own men in the chapter. Both Macworth and Burton protested that they wished to stand by the original statutes which had been confirmed by Rome. However, they and all the others consented to the continuation of the convocation, which Ryngstede then adjourned until Tuesday 29 May. The chapter's attitude to this convocation is illustrated by the short description of events contained in the chapter acts.³ Here their colleague Ryngstede was described as commissioned by the bishop to continue '*quadam convocacionem pretensam*'. On 29 May,⁴ Bishop Alnwick now being present '*sedente in quadragesima convocacione decani et capituli eiusdem ecclesie per eundem... patrem celebrata*', Dean Macworth publicly proclaimed his opposition to the continuance of this '*convocacionis pretense*'. Asked by the bishop if he would consent to the *Novum Registrum*, he declared that he would never agree to ordinances and statutes which redounded so much to the grave prejudice of his dignity.

Although an undated episcopal letter instructed Thomas Thorpe, notary public, to cite Macworth to the prorogued convocation on the

1. LAO: Vj 2, f 38; LCS, vol. III, pp 453-6.

2. *Fasti* I, p 42.

3. LAO: A 2/33, f 48; LCS, vol. III, pp 456-7.

4. A 2/33, f 48; LCS, vol. III, pp 457-8. Unfortunately there is no copy of the bishop's record. The chapter acts give a rather one-sided view.

next Monday 4 June,¹ the next recorded acts of the bishop '*in convocacione sua*' were on 16 August. The deteriorating relationship between Alnwick and Macworth is indicated by the one incident recorded in the chapter acts.² In the middle of the meeting the dean sent for the chapter clerk John Pakington, who was to bring the chapter acts. Alnwick strongly reproved him for this, saying that when he was presiding only he could summon anyone to enter the meeting room, to which Macworth retorted that the bishop was doing him and his brothers a great injustice in this. Pakington withdrew.

The meeting seems to have been prorogued again for, in the spring of 1443, non-resident canons were appointing proctors to appear before the bishop in his convocation to treat of the *Novum Registrum* and to swear to observe the *Laudum*.³ On 29 April,⁴ in the absence of Macworth, Alnwick met together with eight residentiaries in the chapter house, including the new treasurer Thomas Skayman⁵ and three non-residents. The canons discussed among themselves '*de regimine commune ecclesie, et officiis prepositi ac magistri operis et fabrice ecclesie*'. These subjects were included in part five of the *Novum Registrum* so it would seem that, despite the two and a half years that had elapsed since its completion, the latter was still under active consideration. At length, the bishop commissioned Depyng to adjourn the convocation until after Michaelmas.

If the complete convocation did meet in the autumn of 1443 nothing certain is known of what happened, for at this point the bishop's visitation book ceases to be of assistance, and it is

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1. Linc. Reg., f 42v; there is no year given in this commission but 4 June was a Monday in 1442 (*HBD*, p 105).
 2. LAO: A 2/33, f 64v.
 3. *Visitations* II, p 402. In the first entry, the day and the month have been torn away and only the year, 1442, remains. I have dated this to the early months of 1443 on the strength of the next commission which was dated 24 April. (These entries are among items found in Vj 0 by Hamilton Thompson to be additional to Alnwick's monastic visitations.)
 4. LAO: Vj 2, f 40v; *LCS*, vol. III, pp 461-3.
 5. John Haget died on 6 October 1442 (*Fasti* I, p 22).

necessary to try to pick out the chronology of events from seemingly unrelated memoranda in the chapter acts and Alnwick's register. It may be that the majority of the chapter was on the verge of consenting to the *Novum Registrum*, for on Thursday 10 October Macworth suddenly interrupted a meeting of the precentor, chancellor, treasurer and Canons Marshall, Wymbussh, Ward, Ludham and Ryngstede who, they claimed, just happened to be together.¹ Macworth's peremptory warning, that they should observe only the authentic statutes of the church and admit no new ones on pain of major excommunication, resulted in a heated altercation with Ryngstede, the canon's provost and the bishop's most likely supporter. If this argument did, as seems at least possible, concern the *Novum Registrum*, it is the last occasion when the records contain such references. Macworth's continued suspicion of Alnwick's composition of statutes probably inspired his repeated attempts to enforce recognition of the primacy of Fleming's award. This eventually provoked the chapter's patently dishonest appeal to the pope in 1446 that they had never consented to it.² Nevertheless, the bishop's statute book and his *convocatio* seem to have faded from the official agenda.

Indeed, even before the end of 1443, Bishop Alnwick may have decided that his composition was not going to succeed and was not worth the battle. During the period when it was under discussion two statutes composed by the bishop had been accepted, perhaps indicating that Bishop Alnwick had some fears about the final acceptance of the *Novum Registrum*, and was prepared to make piecemeal pronouncements. The first, issued in the summer of 1442, a '*provisio pro minore residencia*' did little more than confirm existing practice.³ Nevertheless, it was an indication of Alnwick's awareness of the issue of residential obligations as a cause of friction in the chapter. Similarly, it may have been with an eye to Robert Burton's complaints about the chapter's

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1. '*Non tamen ad infrascriptum sed subito, ut asserunt, congregati*' (LAO: A 2/33, ff 42-v; LCS, vol. III, pp 484-5).
 2. LAO: A 2/33, ff 31v, 44v, 55v-56; LCS, vol. III, p 486; CPL, vol. IX, p 543.
 3. LAO: A 2/33, f 65.

interference in his right, as precentor, to appoint thurifers,¹ that Alnwick composed his statute on the censuring of the choir. This received the chapter's assent in May 1443,² and was confirmed by them on a number of occasions.³ If this was intended to appease Burton, it failed, perhaps because he had been absent during its deliberation. Whether this, or simply bad temper, was the cause, on 1 January 1445, he violently attacked a thurifer who was attempting to cense him, thus incurring Alnwick's wrath.⁴

Although Alnwick's attempt to rationalise the cathedral's statutes may well have been the underlying cause of tension, a number of other irritants made his task more difficult in the early 1440's. One of these was Dean Macworth's refusal either to pull down the stable he had built in the close wall or to pay the compensation agreed on by the bishop and chapter.⁵ His obstinacy was perhaps exacerbated by his opposition to Alnwick's exercise of his disciplinary jurisdiction over the cathedral's subjects. Certainly, the first clear sign of conflict between dean and bishop, as opposed to dean and chapter, arose over the bishop's visitatorial rights. Macworth vigorously opposed Alnwick's decision to visit the prebendal churches in 1440, even going so far as to write to the chapter of Salisbury cathedral for details of their immunity from such interference.⁶ Alnwick's reply to Macworth's citation of Salisbury's immunity, on 4 October 1440, was masterly in its deflationary effect. He said mildly that the relationships of the bishops to the prebends of Salisbury and Lincoln were of a different nature as at Lincoln, unlike Salisbury, the bishop instituted the vicars, who thus owed him obedience. He added that he would cheerfully listen to anything anyone wished to

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1. LAO: Vj 2, f 37; LCS, vol. III, p 449 (8 October 1440).
 2. Vj 2, f 40v; LCS, vol. III, pp 463-4 (transcript not entirely accurate).
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 45-7; LAO: A 2/33, ff 30v, 32, 54v; LCS, vol. III, pp 486-7.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 60v-61v.
 5. LAO: Vj 2, f 37; LCS, vol. III, pp 448-53.
 6. LCS, vol. I, pp 402-7; Salisbury cathedral had itself been granted complete immunity from visitation in 1262, but in 1392 a new agreement was made that the bishop might visit every seven years (Edwards, 'Salisbury Cathedral', pp 167-72).

add on the subject and thanked the canons for their contribution.¹ Opposition seems to have evaporated three days later, when the bishop assured the chapter that he did not intend to take procurations from the prebends.²

It is difficult to identify what finally provoked the bishop to institute disciplinary proceedings against the dean, but the question of their relative disciplinary jurisdiction would seem to have been a major cause of conflict. A possible flashpoint was an apparently simple disciplinary case against Robert Boy, a chantry chaplain who had been accused of adultery. In March 1443, Macworth inhibited John Tylney, the chapter's official, from proceeding, claiming that he was trespassing on the dean's jurisdiction.³ This clearly irritated Alnwick, who took the case into his own hands.⁴

Shortly after Macworth's inhibition of John Tylney, Alnwick instituted proceedings '*contra decanum ratione executi officii in sede episcopali Linc' in ecclesia Linc' die cinerum etc.*'⁵ His commissaries, John Derby and John Tylney, suffered the dean's delaying tactics,⁶ until the latter appealed to Canterbury, which

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1. The seriousness with which the chapter took this supposed attack on their liberties is perhaps indicated by the record in the common fund account for 1440-1 of a payment of 100s made to Master William Freston, bachelor of both laws, for his labour in the convocation of the canons '*pro parte Decani et capituli in causa visitacionis*' of the Lincoln prebends by the bishop. The entry was cancelled because it concerned '*totam communitatem canonicorum exceptis illis qui sunt sub jurisdictione domini episcopi*' - and so therefore should not have been paid from the common fund? (LAO: Bj 2/12, f 1).
 2. LAO: Vj 2, ff 36v-7; LCS, vol. III, pp 444-7.
 3. LAO: A 2/33, f 56v.
 4. A 2/33, slip between ff 30-1; Linc. Reg., ff 48v-9; Court book, p 93.
 5. Vj 2, f 25v; LCS, vol. III, p 458. Ash Wednesday 1443 was 6 March.
 6. These included the statement by his proctor (William Freston) that Macworth was delayed at Tredington by his pious Lenten duty to administer the sacraments to his parishioners there, a convenient and uncharacteristic attack of ecclesiastical conscience.

automatically inhibited them from proceeding further.¹ The court of Arches had dismissed this appeal by 22 June 1443, when Derby declared Macworth contumacious for not appearing, and adjourned the business until October.² Meanwhile, on 18 August, Macworth was cited to appear before Alnwick, to respond to the articles detected in his second visitation of the cathedral, on the first law day after 19 April 1444.³

This citation clearly did not cow Dean Macworth who, for no apparent reason, excommunicated John Pakington, the clerk of the chapter in November 1443.⁴ Pakington seems to have enjoyed the support of bishop and chapter in both episcopal and archiepiscopal courts. The bishop's and chapter's cohesion on this and other matters is indicated in the notes of expenses in the account of Provost Ryngstede for the year 1443-4.⁵ Macworth ceased to be Alnwick's 'beloved son' and became '*decanum pretensum*' in the bishop's citation issued on 18 May 1444 for his contempt of the bishop's court of audience in continuing to act, primarily against Pakington, in defiance of the bishop's inhibition.⁶ There is no

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1. The common account for 1442-3 (LAO: Bj 2/13, f 30) contains what appears to be a note of the costs of Macworth's appeal to the court of Arches against the bishop. Unfortunately, the almost complete dearth of court of Arches records makes it impossible to study the case from this point of view.
 2. LAO: Vj 2, f 26; LCS, vol. III, p 460.
 3. Linc. Reg., f 51. If this was the bishop's second visitation, it would seem that at Lincoln Alnwick's practice was not dissimilar to that of septennial visitation practised at Salisbury (see above) and Norwich (Cheney, 'Norwich Cathedral Priory', p 93). However, events of 1440 would seem to indicate that Alnwick's 'second ordinary visitation' was, in fact, his third visitation of the cathedral, indicating that he attempted to visit his cathedral triennially. Interpretation is complicated by the coincidence of Alnwick's *convocatio* (which *Eng. Clergy*, p 95, does not mention) and his visitation.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 50-1; A 2/33, f 28v.
 5. Bj 2/13, ff 56v, 59v, 60, 61. Expenses are recorded for pleas against the dean and others in the king's and archbishop's courts; for Ryngstede, Partrich, the subdean, John Tylney, Richard Leescy (the clerk of the common) and others riding to, and staying with, the bishop to discuss the chapter's business (Partrich also visited Cromwell); and John Tylney, William Stanley (one of the senior vicars choral) and others riding to London to support Pakington in the court of Arches.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 44v-5.

evidence that he appeared, as instructed, at Buckden on 13 June. Indeed, on 6 June Macworth's nuncio, John Scott, summoned the chapter for his decanal visitation which would open on 15 June. As the bishop's own visitation was still in progress in September,¹ this was a flagrant act of contumacy on the dean's part. It was perhaps Scott's role in this which caused Alnwick to move against him now.² In October, Alnwick commissioned the dean of Christianity, and others, to inhibit the '*pretensus*' dean from proceeding in a case against a certain John Tower, and to cite him to appear at Buckden in January 1445.³ At Christmas, and again at Epiphany, Provost Rynghstede rode from Lincoln to discuss the chapter's business with the bishop.⁴ The behaviour of dean and precentor⁵ gave them much to discuss.

Dean Macworth probably failed to appear before the bishop as cited on 12 January 1445. The remission to Alnwick of the case against Scott⁶ by the official of the court of Canterbury (William Byconell) probably contained instructions to excommunicate Macworth. On 9 February, William Knyght, rector of Oxcombe, certified to the official of the court of Canterbury that, in obedience to his mandate, sent to Knyght via the bishop, he had solemnly declared the dean excommunicate in Lincoln cathedral.⁷ By now, Macworth, realising that he was not going to win his battle against Alnwick in the archiepiscopal court, had turned to Rome. On 11 February 1445, Eugenius IV granted him absolution from any guilt of perjury he may have incurred by transgressing the statutes of Lincoln and protection from molestation in regard to his deanery or other benefices.⁸

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1. LAO: Vj 2, f 41; LCS, vol. III, pp 464-5.
 2. On 7 October 1444, Alnwick was inhibited from proceeding against Scott by the court of Canterbury but the case was remitted to him on 6 February 1445 (Linc. Reg., f 60).
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 58v-9.
 4. LAO: Bj 2/13, f 22v.
 5. See above, p 51.
 6. In response to this remission, Scott was cited to appear at Buckden on 25 February.
 7. Linc. Reg., f 56.
 8. CPL, vol. IX, pp 467-8.

The source for the events of March 1445 is an allegedly forged public instrument drawn up by Thomas Atkyn, Macworth's notary public.¹ If it is to be believed, it appears that Macworth not only appealed to the apostolic see against the grievances he had suffered at the hands of Bishop Alnwick and the officers of the court of Canterbury,² but had also procured a papal citation against the bishop. In the hopes of securing peace, Archbishop Stafford had appointed Bishops Aiscough of Salisbury, and Brouns of Norwich, and Adam Moleyns, keeper of the privy seal, as arbitrators.³ On 11 March, in the star chamber at Westminster, Macworth appeared before the archbishops of Canterbury and York, and Bishops Alnwick, Brouns, Bouchier and Beckington, and, on being pressed, agreed to renounce his appeals to Rome. If this instrument was forged, Atkyn, and presumably Macworth, took an enormous risk in naming such an eminent body of witnesses. The accusation seems almost inconceivable and, if it was a forgery, why was the result so much in Alnwick's favour? Any peace achieved in March was not, however, to last long. On 3 February 1446, on the appeal of Bishop Alnwick, Eugenius IV instructed Archbishop Kemp, Bishop Beckington and the archdeacon of Hainault to publish a sentence, protecting Alnwick from further molestation or proceedings by Macworth.⁴ Whatever the original causes of their conflict, it would seem that, by now, the two were simply locked in a battle of wills without any particular concrete aims. By February 1447,⁵ the dean was described as excommunicate again. On 25 March, Alnwick commissioned Thomas Balscot and John Derby, his

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1. *CPL*, vol. X, pp 31-4. On 22 January 1449, Nicholas V instructed Cardinal Kemp and Bishop Beckington to investigate the claim of John Westgate, 'promoter of criminal affairs of the court of William, bishop of Lincoln' (not otherwise recorded as an assistant to Alnwick) that it was a forgery by Atkyn.
 2. Byconell received collation of the prebend of Leicester St Margaret at some time between September 1444 and September 1445 (*LAO*: Bj 2/13, f '12'). His actions against Macworth may smack of either collusion or friendly co-operation, depending on the point of view of the observer.
 3. A group which might be expected to support Alnwick's position.
 4. *CPL*, vol. IX, p 481. Perhaps the forgery was directed against this judgement?
 5. *Linc. Reg.*, f 72; *LCS*, vol. III, p 529 - Wordsworth's dating of this archiepiscopal mandate for processions is wrong.

two leading '*jurisperiti*', together with John Tylney, the chapter's auditor, and two bachelors of law, John Aunsell and John Sutton, to proceed against Dean Macworth for his contumacy in not appearing in the bishop's visitation.¹ It is clear that Macworth did not respond to their citation, for on 7 February 1448 the bishop sent signification of his excommunication to the king.² Even this did not bring Macworth to heel, for, on 22 November 1448, Nicholas V wrote to Archbishop Kemp and Bishop Beckington,³ informing them that in order to interrupt Alnwick's process against him, Macworth had appealed to the court of Canterbury, and when that court's official remitted the inquiry to Bishop Alnwick, had appealed to Rome. Nicholas, declaring that he had seen through Macworth's ruse to escape from Alnwick's jurisdiction and the obedience he owed him, instructed Kemp and Beckington to take over the inquiry. They were to punish Macworth for any crimes he had committed, and even, if necessary, deprive him of his deanery and other benefices. The outcome of this commission is not known. Nicholas's sympathies would seem to have still inclined towards Alnwick, since, two months later, he issued the same bishops with an instruction to inquire into the possibility of Atkyn's forgery.⁴

On 5 February 1449, Alnwick again wrote to the king, requesting the arrest of the excommunicate dean.⁵ Most writers on the dispute consider that it lasted until the bishop's death.⁶ However, a little noticed⁷ letter among the significations of excommunication tells a different story. On 3 July 1449, Bishop Alnwick informed the king that '*nos tamen prefato Magistro Johanni decano ad gremium sancte matris ecclesie redeunti et beneficium absolucionis se hujusmodi excommunicationis sentenciam humiliter petenti et devote*

1. Linc. Reg., f 70.

2. PRO: Chancery: Significations of excommunication (C 85): C 85/112/38.

3. CPL, vol. X, pp 34-5.

4. See above, p 55.

5. C 85/112/39.

6. 5 December 1449; see e.g. *Eng. Clergy.*, p 97; Venables, 'William Alnwick', p 343.

7. It is noted in F.D. Logan, *Excommunication and the Secular Arm in Medieval England. A Study in Legal Procedure from the Thirteenth to the Sixteenth Century* (Toronto, 1968), p 63.

beneficium absolucionis hujusmodi impendimus in debita iuris forma',¹

Difficult as it is to imagine the '*superbus decanus*' acting '*humiliter*', and disappointed as he may have been by the failure of his *Novum Registrum* to be ratified, Bishop Alnwick was able to die in the satisfactory knowledge that he had asserted his authority over the dean. John Macworth himself died towards the end of 1451, still the subject of complaints that he was failing in his provision of meals.² Alnwick and Macworth were not the only players to disappear from the scene at about this time. By 1452, all the dignitaries who had been in position when Alnwick succeeded to the bishopric had died. The disappearance of this long-lived and contentious group ushered in a much needed period of peace for the cathedral close. The new dean, Robert Fleming, was of a different stamp to Macworth and seems to have coexisted comfortably with John Chedworth who succeeded the short-lived Marmaduke Lumley as bishop.³

The exact causes of the acrimonious dispute between Macworth and Alnwick are now elusive. Gascoigne, bemoaning the amount of money spent in Rome on inconclusive judgements, blamed the overweening dean '*qui optavit ut totiens sibi turificaretur, sicut episcopo; et si episcopus esset praesens in ecclesia Lincoln, quod nec episcopus nec alius inciperet officium in ecclesia illa, quousque decanus stallum suum intravit; ex qua controversia plurima mala secuta sunt*'.⁴ This rather garbled account has perhaps more truth in it than at first appears. Alnwick was clearly a man whose dignity was of the utmost importance to him.⁵ Evidently, the same was true of Macworth. He could accomodate a bishop who imposed a fair arbitration on the disputes of dean and chapter, and perhaps he would have accepted a tidying up of the cathedral's statutes. The *Novum Registrum* was, however, something more than this. It was

1. PRO: C 85/112/41.

2. CPL, vol. X, pp 535-6.

3. Eng. Clergy, p 97.

4. *Loci e Libro*, p 153.

5. See below, pp 248-9.

a complete rule book, borrowed from a foreign community, by an outsider who, once his composition was accepted, would brook no deviation from it. Psychologically, neither Macworth's negative response nor Alnwick's offence at the rejection of the work, on which he had expended considerable time and energy, is surprising.

Unfortunately, the sources, although of considerable quantity, are not comprehensive. It is impossible to tell what befell the committee-work on the *Novum Registrum* after about 1443. Perhaps Alnwick realised he was fighting a losing battle and quietly withdrew, although this does not seem very much in keeping with his character. Perhaps he hoped to outlive Macworth and try again. Whatever the truth, it seems clear, as Henry Bradshaw painstakingly revealed, that the *Novum Registrum* was never formally adopted as a replacement for the Black Book.¹ Although not the official statute book, it did contain a useful digest of actual custom observed in Lincoln cathedral, and so it was natural that several copies were made during the century between its compilation and the Reformation. The break with Rome, the Civil War and the Commonwealth created considerable dislocation in the life of the cathedral. When the episcopate returned to Lincoln in 1660, sight had been lost of the relative values of the various collections of statutes and customs. In 1680, in reply to a request for information from their bishop, the chapter announced that their statutes consisted of three books: the Black Book, the *Novum Registrum* and Alnwick's *Laudum*. The 1690's saw the first installations according to the procedure laid down in the *Novum Registrum*, including oaths to observe it. By 1873, so great was its acceptance that it was published as part of the *Statuta Ecclesiae Cathedralis Lincolnensis*. However, in the 1880's Bradshaw overturned the recognition which had been granted to the *Novum Registrum* in the previous two hundred years; and so now, although the canons still swear to observe Alnwick's *Laudum*, his *Novum Registrum* is once again relegated from legal viability.

1. The story of the *Novum Registrum*'s gradual adoption encompasses much of the massive introduction of *LCS*, vol. I. A shorter chronology of significant events is contained on pp 217-23.

4. Norwich: Cathedral and City

If William Alnwick's association with Lincoln cathedral's chapter was surrounded by unmitigated drama, his relations with Norwich cathedral priory seem to have been remarkably peaceful. This may perhaps be attributed to the man whose incumbency as prior of Norwich coincided nearly exactly with that of Alnwick as bishop. Shortly after Alnwick's provision to Norwich, Robert Brunham, the prior who had quarrelled fiercely with Bishop Tottington, was succeeded by William Worsted. When Worsted died, shortly before Alnwick's translation to Lincoln, he was succeeded by John Heverlond, who was to have an acrimonious dispute with Bishop Thomas Brouns on the subject of *reverencia*.¹ William Alnwick's capacity for embroiling himself in disputes is illustrated by his relations with Dean Macworth and Abbots Curteys and Whethamstede.² Perhaps Worsted had a less combative nature than either his predecessor or successor. It is also possible that both men were too occupied with other more important affairs to spend much time on domestic squabbles. Alnwick was heavily involved in affairs of state until 1432.³ From that date, Worsted spent two years abroad at the council of Basle. Shortly after Worsted returned from Basle, Alnwick would have left for the congress of Arras, so perhaps their lack of friction can be attributed, in the main, to lack of contact. Much of the time that Bishop Alnwick was in Norwich, before the council of Basle, was dedicated to his campaign against Lollardy in the diocese.⁴ Worsted, a doctor of theology, was a natural ally in this battle.

Despite all these arguments, the appearance of peace may simply be a mirage created by lack of sources. There are two hints that, perhaps, all was not as it should be. E.F. Jacob stated that 'before 1433, Bishop Alnwick had had great trouble with his prior, for the latter was responsible for ordering the services of the

1. See Jacob, 'Thomas Brouns', pp 77-8.

2. See below, pp 238-56.

3. See below, pp 287-307.

4. See below, pp 198-203.

monastic cathedral'.¹ He cites no sources for, and gives no instances of, this 'great trouble'. Could he have been confusing Lincoln with Norwich?² The other hint is a general warning sent from the council of Basle for the monasteries to beware of episcopal plots. John Fornesete, a Norwich monk who accompanied Worsted to Basle, wrote from there to William Curteys, abbot of Bury St Edmunds, warning him to beware of attacks on monastic exemptions for: 'Judas does not sleep; the bishops are working, not only to do away with exemptions, but to abolish the impropriation of tithes by the monasteries'.³ Fornesete would not have written thus without his prior's permission. Bearing in mind Alnwick's contemporary disputes with Abbots Whethamstede and Curteys, it is perhaps dangerous to assume that the apparent peace revealed by the records was the true situation.

If, as far as we can tell, relations within the cathedral close were comparatively peaceful during Alnwick's Norwich episcopate, those between the priory and the city and among the citizens were difficult for most of the first half of the fifteenth century.⁴ Alnwick's role in these disputes would seem to have been, as it was, at least initially, in Lincoln, that of peace-maker rather than combatant. The first notice we have of the bishop's involvement with the city is festive. In the year 1432-3,⁵ £6 2s 8d was spent in 'expenses incurred for parcel of the revell made to Lord William Bishop of Norwich, by the advice of Thomas Wetherby, Mayor, Aldermen and many of the commons'. Wetherby was to be at

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1. 'Thomas Brouns', p 77.
 2. Neither the registers of Alnwick and Brouns (NRO: REG 5/10) nor Emmanuel College, Cambridge, Ms. 142 (a Norwich cathedral manuscript relating mainly to the council of Basle) contain any suggestion of such 'trouble'.
 3. *Memorials of St Edmund's Abbey*, ed. T. Arnold, RS, no. 96, vol. III (1896), pp 254-7.
 4. The city disputes are related in Blomefield, vol. III, pp 144-53; Hudson and Tingey, *Norwich City Records*, vol. I, pp lxxix-lxxxviii, 280-3, 328-43; Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, pp 144-62. The common council records are missing for the period of Alnwick's episcopate. For an alternative view of Thomas Wetherby, see W.J. Blake 'Thomas Wetherby', *Norfolk Archaeology*, vol. XXXII (1961), pp 60-72.
 5. Hudson and Tingey, *Norwich City Records*, vol. II, p 67.

the centre of the dispute with which Alnwick became involved.

Wetherby had been elected mayor for the second time in 1432. On 1 May 1433, perhaps not long after they had entertained their bishop, the citizens met to elect Wetherby's replacement. They followed customary practice in electing two men, Richard Purdance and John Gerard, from whom the mayor was to be chosen. Wetherby was determined that one William Gray should succeed him and, assisted by what seems to have been a corrupt common clerk who returned the names of Gray and Gerard, he declared Gray to have been elected and retired with him to his house at Intwood. The commons then assembled in a private house and proceeded to elect Purdance. Fearing that, without Wetherby's consent, this election might not be legal, they then refused to disperse until Wetherby had confirmed the election. The aldermen, unsure what to do next, instructed the common council to wait upon Bishop Alnwick, which they did, begging him to send for Wetherby to return and satisfy the people. Alnwick's powers of persuasion were apparently substantial for he seems to have managed to persuade Wetherby to promise 'with mouth and heart and with his hand in the bishop's hand' to confirm Purdance's election.'

The matter did not rest there. Within a year, the parties were complaining about each other's behaviour to the king. The unrest was eventually so great that on 14 March 1437 the king commissioned Bishop Alnwick, now bishop of Lincoln, the earl of Suffolk, Lord Cromwell and Sir William Philip to investigate the causes of dissension.² It is not clear what active role Alnwick, or indeed Cromwell and Philip, played in this commission. On 21 March, Suffolk summoned an assembly of all the leading combatants who submitted to his arbitration. Peace was apparently shortlived for, in the summer of 1437,³ the city and its liberties were seized into the king's hands and John Welles, an alderman of both Norwich and London, was appointed keeper of the city. Bishop Alnwick

1. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p lxxxiv.

2. *Ibid.*, pp 281-2.

3. Blomefield, vol. III, p 146, says 8 September but *PPC*, vol. V, p 45 gives 12 July as the date the decision was made.

attended the council meeting which decided on this action and, later in the year,' took part in a discussion which led to the imposition of a mayor until a proper election could be held. In December 1439, he joined with his successor, Thomas Brouns, in appealing for the restoration of the city's liberties. Their grant on condition that the citizens used standard weights and measures in their business seems to indicate the suspicion of some kind of corruption.²

Again, there was apparently only a short respite before violence broke out within the city. 'Gladman's insurrection' of 1443 witnessed a violent attack on Norwich cathedral priory, that was probably the climax of years of grumbling resentment caused by conflict between the jurisdiction granted to the city in its 1404 charter and the ancient liberties of the major ecclesiastical landholders, notably the priory.³ Again the city's liberties were seized, this time not to be restored until 1447. One result of the insurrection would seem to have been the healing of the schism between Brouns and his cathedral, whose chronicler could thus write fondly of him after his death: '*in cuius tempore cives Norwici contra matricem insurrexerunt; et eam penitus conculcare ac privare suis libertatibus studuerunt. Contra quos predictus Episcopus per se et per suos amicos ac per multimodas expensas viriliter se opposuit; tanquam turris fortitudinis pro libertate domus Domini*'.⁴ This time Bishop Alnwick was not involved. By 1443, he was deeply into his dispute with the dean of Lincoln and can have had little time to consider the problems of his first, and more peaceful, spouse, Norwich cathedral priory.⁵

1. PPC, vol. V, pp 76-8 - an undated meeting.

2. CPR, 1436-41, p 357.

3. This uprising received some notice in 'John Benet's Chronicle for the Years 1400 to 1462', ed. G.L. and M.A. Harriss, pp 151-233 in *Camden Miscellany*, no. XXIV, Camden Society, 4th Series, vol. IX (1972), p 189. See also E.F. Jacobs, 'Two Documents Relating to Thomas Brouns', *Norfolk Archaeology*, vol. XXXIII (1965), pp 427-49.

4. *Anglia Sacra*, ed. H. Wharton, 2 vols (1691), vol. I, p 417.

5. In contrast to the rich but turbulent city of Norwich, Lincoln seems to have been suffering from financial decline in this period. This may account for its apparent docility throughout Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate (see Hill, *Medieval Lincoln*).

5. Bishop Alnwick and his Cathedrals

It would be wrong to imagine that the relationship between Bishop Alnwick, or indeed any bishop, and his cathedral chapters was totally dominated by quarrels and constitutional change. 'Conflicts did not exclude collaboration'.¹ The conflicts were only one, and probably not the most important, part of the constant interchange between bishop and chapter. Indeed, the chapter should not be regarded as a monolithic body. William Alnwick may well have disliked John Macworth, Robert Burton and, indeed, other members of the Lincoln chapter, but they were only individuals in a group. Others, such as Thomas Ryngrstede and, later, John Breton were protégés and even friends of the bishop. Indeed the chapter, although important, did not encompass the sum total of the canons. Alnwick's belief that all canons had a part to play in the rule of the cathedral is illustrated by their summons to his convocation. Among the non-resident canons were men he probably knew well from university, such as William Lyndwood, and royal service, such as Thomas Beckington, together with several of his own servants. Moreover, episcopal and cathedral life interconnected in several ways.

The bishop's routine relationship with the cathedrals is revealed, to some extent by financial records. Archbishop Arundel's 1411 arbitration at Norwich² had ruled that the bishop should pay a pension to the cathedral for his palace chapel. Both the contemporary cellarer's account and the accounts of Alnwick's own receiver general, reveal its regular payment.³ The accounts also record payments made to the bishop by the various

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1. P. Heath, *Church and Realm, 1272-1461. Conflict and Collaboration in an Age of Crisis* (1988), p 61. Heath was writing about the relations between church and state but the quote applies equally to the relations between bishop and cathedral and, indeed, bishop and religious orders.
 2. See above, pp 20-1.
 3. NRO: DCN 1/2/45 (cellarer's account for 1426-7) records 40s paid for half a year; EST 15/1/1, and EST 15/1/2 (receiver general's accounts 1428-30) and DCN 1/2/46-52 (1427-37) record payments and receipts of £4 annual rent.

obedientiaries of the priory for rents of mills and manors;¹ and the purchase of goods such as grain and wool;² plus payments of pensions due to the bishop for appropriated churches.³ Less regularly, friendly relations are revealed by expenses incurred for the bishop's entertainment.⁴

Similarly, the accounts of the provost and common clerk of Lincoln cathedral, while revealing more than the Norwich accounts of expenses engendered by the cathedral's problems, also record the bishop's everyday associations with the chapter. Recorded are payments of rents⁵ and fees of the bishop's manorial courts⁶ to the bishop. He also shared in distributions from the common fund for the days when he was in residence.⁷ Also recorded are the expenses of those visiting the bishop on the chapter's behalf,⁸ plus payments to his nuncios⁹ and to those writing letters to him for the chapter.¹⁰

If the bishop and cathedral chapter were thus intimately connected in their routine administration, they further relied on each other for confirmation of their major acts. For example, Arundel's adjudication of 1411 ruled that no grant for life or perpetuity might be made by Norwich cathedral priory without the bishop's consent.¹¹ Similarly, the chapter's permission was needed

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1. NRO: DCN 1/1/77-80 (master of the cellar); DCN 1/2/49-51.
 2. DCN 1/2/50-51; DCN 1/5/54-65 (chamberlain).
 3. DCN 1/2/45-50.
 4. DCN 1/1/80 (master of the cellar).
 5. LAO: Bj 2/12, f 7; Bj 2/13, ff 56v, '14', '22'v; Bj 2/14, ff 12, 82v, 110; Bj 2/15, f 11.
 6. Bj 2/13, ff 60, 76, '24'v; Bj 2/14, ff 32, 65v, 86v, 112v; Bj 2/15, f 14.
 7. Bj 2/12, f 6v; Bj 2/13, ff 30, 63v, 27; LAO: A 4/8, f 11. An indication that John Depyng's suggestion, made during the bishop's primary visitation of the cathedral, that non-resident canons should share in the distributions, had been accepted (see above, p 34).
 8. Bj 2/12, f 10v; Bj 2/13, ff 59v, 61v; Bj 2/15, f 14v.
 9. Bj 2/12, f 10.
 10. Bj 2/15, f 14v.
 11. Carter, *Studies*, pp, 70, 72. An example of this was Alnwick's confirmation (2 September 1429) of their agreement with Bishop Wakering's executors about the latter's chantry (NRO: DCN 43, Box 2, R 235c).

for such major episcopal acts as alienation of church property,¹ and the appropriation of churches.² The union of churches,³ confirmations of the appointments of priors,⁴ prioresses,⁵ and even grammar school masters,⁶ were all made '*consuetudinibus episcopalibus et ecclesie cathedralis Norwicensis iure ac eciam dignitate in omnibus semper salvus*'. Similarly, in 1440, Alnwick could not accede to the request of Lord Cromwell to raise the parish church of Tattershall into a collegiate church without the consent of the dean and chapter of Lincoln. They did not allow their suspicion of the *Novum Registrum*, which was under almost simultaneous consideration, to influence their reactions. Their response may have been affected by the fact that Ralph Cromwell was one of the most powerful local lords, but their swift acquiescence to the scheme is at least indicative of their readiness to support the bishop in his administration when that did not threaten their own position.⁷

The chapter's confirming role was a development of its origin as the bishop's '*familia*' and natural source of counsel. This relationship had not entirely disappeared, and Alnwick was not unusual in using members of his chapters as either *ad hoc* or permanent assistants in his diocesan administration. The most dramatic events in which the Norwich cathedral priory assisted were those surrounding Bishop Alnwick's prosecutions of heretics in the years 1428-31. The convent had already exhibited its opposition to heresy by making contributions '*contra fratrem minorem Russell hereticum*' in 1425-6.⁸ There is no evidence that the priory actually imprisoned suspects for Alnwick as religious orders had

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1. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, p 100. Cf. Edwards 'Salisbury Cathedral', p 161.
 2. Burnham, p 80.
 3. *Ibid.*, p 98. Examples of such saving clauses in the records of unions are in Norw. Reg., ff 47v, 100v-101, 109v-11, 113v-14.
 4. Norw. Reg., ff 67-8.
 5. *Ibid.*, f 40v.
 6. *Ibid.*, f 72v.
 7. LAO: VJ 2, f 37; LCS, vol. III, pp 447-8, 480; CPL, vol. IX, pp 159-63.
 8. NRO: DCN 1/4/59 (sacrist); DCN 1/5/53 (chamberlain); DCN 1/6/55 (almoner).

been requested to do in the 1428 convocation of the southern province,¹ but the cellarer did pay 3s 4d to a coroner '*sedenti super unum lollardum se ipsum suspendentem in palacio domini episcopi*'.² More significantly, assistance was given in the conduct of trials. John Derham, doctor of theology and prior of Bishop's Lynn, assisted at the trial of Richard Fletcher of Beccles on 27 August 1429.³ A much greater contribution was made by the cathedral's prior, William Worsted, who assisted Bishop Alnwick at the trials of William White and seventeen other suspects between September 1428 and September 1430.⁴ He was not present, however, for any of the trials conducted by William Bernham, the bishop's vicar general.⁵ Perhaps he felt it was beneath his dignity to attend on a man of less station than himself. Nevertheless, while he did not attend the trial, he assisted Bernham in the case of Nicholas Canon, giving judgement with theologians from the mendicant orders of Norwich as to what was heretical and what merely erroneous among Canon's beliefs.⁶ In addition, in Alnwick's absence, Worsted presided over the penitent heretics appearing in the cathedral on Ash Wednesday 1431.⁷

Monks could not play a leading part in diocesan administration. Bishop Alnwick did, however, commission eight of the leading monks of the cathedral, five of them priors of dependent cells, to act as penitentiaries in his diocese.⁸ There was also some sharing of

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 192-3; Capes, *The English Church*, p 189.
 2. NRO: DCN 1/2/46 (1428-9).
 3. *Trials*, p 84.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp 9, 33, 51-4, 59-62, 84, 103-5, 114, 120, 125, 130-1, 134-6, 139, 145, 157, 168, 178, 182; *FZ*, p 417.
 5. *Trials*, pp 77, 191-216.
 6. Foxe, vol. III, pp 599-600.
 7. *Trials*, pp 194-5.
 8. Norw. Reg., ff 101v-102v, 103v. They were John Elyngham; Nicholas Randeworth; Robert Yarmouth; John Derham, prior of Lynn; John Heverlond, prior of Yarmouth; Richard Eye, prior of Aldeby (all 29 September 1430); John Eglyngton, prior of Hoxne (4 October 1430); and Nicholas Kelfield, prior of Aldeby (22 January 1436). The 1411 arbitration legislated for the bishop's part in admitting cathedral penitentiaries but it looks as if these men were to hear the confessions of all Alnwick's subjects, not just cathedral monks.

officials between the bishop and cathedral. For example, Master John Walpole, dean of the priory's manors,¹ was also a rural dean in the diocese of Norwich, and later received collation of a Lincoln cathedral canonry.² Similarly, John Tylney, Lincoln cathedral's auditor of causes, assisted Bishop Alnwick on a number of occasions.³

William Alnwick benefited from the assistance of members of the Lincoln cathedral body in several ways. Those who were already canons tended to receive *ad hoc* commissions. Of the residentiaries, John Percy, the subdean, was commissioned to commit the administration of the goods of Sir Walter Tailboys to his son, and to act in a divorce case.⁴ Thomas Beckington and Richard Andrew, successive archdeacons of Buckingham, and William Lyndwood, archdeacon of Stow, all non-resident canons, were commissioned by Alnwick to assist Bishop Aiscough in raising Eton to a collegiate church.⁵ John Beverley, prebendary of Aylesbury, preached on eighteen occasions during Alnwick's visitations of religious houses.⁶ However, John Depyng, prebendary of Buckden 1427-1445/6,⁷ was the only one of Alnwick's longstanding commissaries who was a canon before first being employed by the bishop. Even Robert Thornton, the bishop's official principal, whose long association with the cathedral had lasted since his admission as chapter clerk in 1414, did not become a canon until Alnwick collated the archdeaconry of Bedford to him in 1439.⁸ Indeed, although Alnwick employed several canons, both resident and not, as commissaries, most of them had already been so employed before receiving collation. John Leek, John Proctor, Walter Sandwich, John Wardale,

1. NRO: DCN 1/1/80.

2. He was prebendary of Leicester St Margaret in 1444-5 (LAO: Bj 2/13, f 6v). He is not noted in *Fasti* I.

3. E.g. Linc. Reg., ff 20-1, 70.

4. Linc. Reg., ff 60v, 66.

5. *Bekynton Correspondence*, vol. II, p 273.

6. *Visitations* II, p 419.

7. The date of his death is uncertain. Both he and his successor, William Alnwick (jnr), are recorded in the common account for the financial year 1445-6 (Bj 2/14, ff 52, 57v).

8. K. Major, 'The Office of Chapter Clerk at Lincoln in the Middle Ages', pp 163-88 in *Medieval Studies Presented to Rose Graham*, ed. V. Ruffer and A.J. Taylor (Oxford, 1950), p 184.

John Smeton, John Sutton and John Crosby had all served Alnwick as commissaries general before being promoted to Lincoln cathedral canonries.¹ Thomas Skayman had acted for Alnwick before he became treasurer;² and John Derby had assisted in his court of audience before receiving the prebend of Bedford Major in 1445.³ All this indicates the double usefulness of cathedral canonries to Alnwick, both as a source of able administrative personnel and as a reward and means of support for his administrators.

'The most powerful instrument in any diocesan's relationship with his cathedral [was] his right to collate'.⁴ His freedom of choice may have been curtailed from time to time by pressures from king or pope but there is not much evidence that Bishop Alnwick felt compelled to submit to such pressure when it did not coincide with his own choice. This is particularly clear in the face of papal pressure. In 1438, William Alnwick refused to admit Peter Barbo, nephew of Pope Eugenius, to the prebend of Sutton cum Buckingham in replacement of William Aiscough, recently promoted to the bishopric of Salisbury.⁵ He preferred Nicholas Dixon.⁶ Piero da Monte, the papal nuncio, tried desperately to persuade the bishop, but was met with obdurate refusal, a stand that made da Monte, who already despised him as a '*rusticanus homo ex villi genere natus*', describe Alnwick as '*duri capitis et inexorabilis*'.⁷ Bishop Alnwick apparently wrote to Eugenius to explain that he could not comply with his wishes because of the statutes of Provisors. Eugenius replied that compliance was imperative because

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 28, 31, 34, 53, 68v-9, 76, 108, 109, 110, 130; LAO: Bj 2/14, ff 47v, 57v. See Appendix IV for details of their prebends.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 42v, 76v, 110v.
 3. *Ibid.*, f 110v.
 4. Dobson, 'Later Middle Ages', p 48.
 5. CPL, vol. VIII, pp 266-7; J. Haller, *Piero da Monte. Ein Gelehrter und Päpstlicher Beamter Des 15 Jahrhunderts Seine Brief Sammlung Herausgegeben und Erläutert* (Rome, 1941), pp 73-7, 216-7, 224.
 6. *Fasti* I, p 114.
 7. Haller, *Piero da Monte*, p 74. He claimed that Alnwick had initially met the request in a more compliant manner. See also Appendix III, pp 382-3.

the prebend was vacant in the curia¹ and so was in the pope's gift; that Barbo had royal permission to receive prebends;² and, more than all this, because the bishop owed obedience to the pope. Eugenius also wrote to Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, Cardinal Beaufort and King Henry for support in this matter.³ He assumed that it was the king's wish to have the prebend granted to Thomas Beckington which prevented Alnwick from complying with his wishes, so he suggested that Beckington should be given the prebend (Langford Manor) recently vacated by the death of Robert Sutton. Alnwick probably had little need to comply with this suggestion as Beckington was already archdeacon of Buckingham, but his collation of Langford Manor to Thomas Colas⁴ shows a firm determination to have his own way.

Bishop Alnwick may well, as da Monte suspected, have been more susceptible to royal than papal pressure in the matter of collations, but his patronage of such men as William Lyndwood⁵ and William Percy⁶ may have owed as much to his own inclination as to any outside pressure. Certainly the majority of those receiving prebends seem to have owed their preferment to their connection to the bishop, either as his former servants, such as those discussed above, or as his more personal protégés such as John Breton⁷ and the younger William Alnwick.⁸ One should not overemphasise the success that could be achieved by interfering with a bishop's right to collate. 'At Lincoln in 1444 not a single member of the cathedral chapter held his benefice by papal provision, and - we may add - only two held by royal grant.'⁹

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1. Because its previous holder had become a bishop.
 2. This was true (J. Ferguson, *English Diplomacy, 1422-1461* (Oxford, 1972), p 135, citing PRO: C 81/701/3153).
 3. CPL, vol. VIII, pp 266-7.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 108.
 5. Archdeacon of Oxfordshire 1438 (Linc. Reg., f 107). For some reason the bishop wrote to the archdeacon of Lincoln, not the dean and chapter, to install him.
 6. Haydour-cum-Walton, 1443 (LAO: A 2/33, f 30v).
 7. Welton Paynshall, 1447 (Linc. Reg., f 110).
 8. Buckden, 1445-6 (LAO: Bj 2/14, f 57v.)
 9. R.W. Southern, *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages* (1970), p 166. Some doubt may be cast on the suitability of all Alnwick's collations by the case (ctd on next page)

It is difficult to guess how much more William Alnwick wished to do in his appointment of canons than to reward servants and friends. These new canons could not influence the policy of the cathedral chapter unless they were resident; and very few of them seem to have been able to reside until their years of episcopal service were ended.¹ The Lincoln chapter saw few changes in the years he was bishop. The only dignities to fall vacant during his episcopate were those of the treasurer and, towards the end of the period, the precentor, thus giving him little chance to influence the central core of the chapter. However, the residence of Thomas Ryngrstede in the 1440's may have been part of an attempt to influence the chapter at a difficult period. Such a policy would have been assisted by Ryngrstede's position as provost for the three accounting years of 1442-5,² a post for which he was eminently qualified by his experience as receiver general in the diocese of Norwich.³

Bishop Alnwick was not in a position to wield similar influence over the personnel of the Norwich cathedral chapter. In the election of the prior, the bishop's role consisted only of checking the legality of the monks' procedures and confirming their choice. Prior Robert Brunham died at the beginning of September 1427. The subprior (William Worsted) and convent then sought a licence from the bishop to elect a successor. This was granted, on 14 September, with the instruction that they act with their eyes on God and choose someone who would contribute to the spiritual and

(ctd) of John Crosby who was not only illegitimate but had, before his preferment, committed murder when defending himself in a quarrel with an 'old and turgid' glover who, when berated for failing to deliver some gloves, had drawn his knife and injured Crosby (CPL, vol. X, pp 215-7).

1. Cf. Dobson, 'Later Middle Ages', p 105.
2. LAO: Bj 2/13.
3. See below, pp 120-1. The financial difficulties and mismanagement of chapter estates revealed by Alnwick's earlier investigations into the condition of Lincoln cathedral certainly called for such experience. Ryngrstede was granted a dispensation by the subdean and chapter to make minor residence although he was not yet qualified to do so when they elected him in September 1442 (LAO: A 2/33, ff 51v, 59).

temporal prosperity of the church.' On being informed of the election, Alnwick, unable to come to Norwich because of his commitments to royal government, commissioned William Bernham, his vicar general, to check that the election was canonical and to provide for Worsted's installation.² On 17 October in the bishop's chapel, Bernham examined and approved the process of election, whereupon Worsted promised canonical obedience to the bishop and Bernham commissioned John Derham, then subprior, to install the new prior.³ After Worsted's death in 1436 the bishop himself examined and confirmed the election of John Heverlond before instructing Bernham, as official principal, to install.⁴

Apparently, in most cathedral priories the bishop had the right to choose those filling obedientiary positions from two or three names submitted by the prior and convent.⁵ However, at Norwich the choice of obedientiaries and priors of dependent cells lay with the prior and convent who merely presented their candidates to the bishop for confirmation.⁶ Thus we find the prior and 'seniores' of the chapter informing the bishop of their wish to make Nicholas Randeworth subprior, replacing him as master of the hospital of St Peter with Richard Walsham.⁷ Similarly, the bishop was compelled to admit the convent's choice of dean of the jurisdiction of their manors, although he could deprive the dean and demand a replacement if he proved disobedient to the bishop.⁸ Thus, in 1429, Master John Walpole's appointment was confirmed by the vicar general, who subsequently, like Alnwick, sent frequent instructions to Walpole to induct those instituted to benefices within the jurisdiction.⁹

The bishop had similarly little power over the choice of the junior members of the cathedral bodies although he was involved in

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1. Norw. Reg., f 97v.
 2. *Ibid.*, f 8 (8 October). If the election were uncanonical Alnwick claimed a right to provide a replacement.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 8, 27v.
 4. *Ibid.*, f 87v.
 5. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, p 120.
 6. Carter, *Studies*, pp 64-5.
 7. 31 December 1427 (Norw. Reg., f 97).
 8. Carter, *Studies*, pp 66-70.
 9. Norw. Reg., ff 33v, 49, 52v, 56, 64v, 69v, 70v, 79v.

their admissions. At Lincoln, prebendal vicars were appointed by their masters, although it was the bishop who wrote to the dean and chapter for their admission.¹ He could also, of course, collate these vicarages when the prebendary failed to provide a vicar.² There also seem to have been a number of minor positions within the cathedral which lay within the bishop's gift. For example, in August 1438 Alnwick collated the chantry of Bishop Hugh of Welles to William Dighton, thus forcing the dean and chapter, who considered that such chantries should primarily be used to augment the income of vicars choral, to make Dighton a vicar choral.³ The position of cathedral verger seems also to have been in his gift.⁴

At Norwich, it was part of the bishop's role to admit, bless and supervise the profession of the junior monks of the cathedral.⁵ On 31 December 1427, shortly after his enthronement, the prior and chapter wrote to Alnwick asking him to solemnize the professions of seven new monks, an act which he performed in the cathedral on 4 January. Two days later, the prior and chapter presented to him, via Brother Clement Thornage who had been their messenger the week before, four candidates, clothed in their first monastic habits for admission. On the next day, Alnwick admitted them with his solemn kiss and blessing.⁶ William Alnwick may well, as a good diocesan bishop, have relished this contact with the young postulants.

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1. LAO: A 2/32, ff 124, 125. Alnwick committed a *faux pas* in his first such letter to the chapter (1437: A 2/32, f 121v) by addressing the subdean as president, thus raising a storm of protest from Precentor Burton, who stated that, because the subdean swore canonical obedience to the dean or president and chapter, he was not, necessarily, to be regarded as president. Alnwick's error may perhaps be explained by the fact that the subprior of Norwich was that chapter's president.
 2. E.g. the collations of the prebendal vicarages of North Kelsey and Nassington (the dean's prebend), by lapse, in March 1445 (or 1446) and September 1447 (Linc. Reg., ff 97v, 144v).
 3. A 2/32, f 132.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 108, 110v.
 5. Carter, *Studies*, pp 63-4.
 6. Norw. Reg., f 97. Perhaps Thornage was in the position of novice master?

A similar devotion to his duty of admitting new churchmen to the ecclesiastical fold may be revealed by the very real effort he seems to have made to officiate at services of ordination in the diocese of Norwich.¹ The ordination lists contained in Alnwick's Norwich register,² like all other Norwich registers for the years 1413-86, give no indication that any of the ordinands were regulars.³ It has been suggested⁴ that the regulars were merely hidden among secular candidates but, as all those named seem to have had some kind of title to support them in their candidacy, none of which came from Norwich cathedral priory, it seems unlikely that any of them were monks of the cathedral priory. Moreover, the other two major monasteries of the diocese, Bury St Edmunds and St Benet at Hulme, were similarly notable for their absence from the title-givers.⁵ It thus appears either that separate lists of regular ordinands were kept or that the major regular houses sought ordination for their brethren from bishops other than their diocesan.⁶ Nevertheless, it seems unlikely that the prior of Norwich sought ordination for his monks from foreign bishops when he had his own bishop, plus Alnwick's suffragan, on the doorstep. The Lincoln ordination records for 1435-49 are lost; but the Lincoln cathedral chapter acts indicate that on at least three occasions the chapter nominated to the bishop candidates for ordination from among the poor clerks and junior vicars choral.⁷

Although these ordinations might take place at any convenient church, the most obvious location was the cathedral itself. Alnwick's immediate predecessors had not used Norwich cathedral for ordinations,⁸ but Bishop Alnwick ordained there between 1428 and

1. See below, p 128.

2. Norw. Reg., ff 118-146.

3. See J.F. Williams, 'Ordination in the Norwich Diocese during the Fifteenth Century', pp 347-58, in *Norfolk Archaeology*, vol. XXXI (1957), p 356.

4. *Ibid.*, p 358.

5. A point noted by Williams (p 355).

6. See below, pp 241-2, for the use of the bishop of Emly by Bury St Edmunds.

7. LAO: A 2/32, ff 125, 134; A 2/33, f 7 (September 1437 and 1438 and February 1439).

8. Williams, 'Ordinations', pp 351-2.

1436.¹ It may be that his more difficult relationship with the dean and chapter made Lincoln a less attractive place to linger, but it is unlikely that Alnwick, aware of his own dignity, would have abandoned his role in the mother church of the diocese. On certain feast days he would have been expected to take a principal part in celebrating at the high altar and processing with the other dignitaries round the church, completing the proceedings by feasting the choir. If possible, the making of chrism and blessing of holy oils, supplied by the cathedral to all the churches of the diocese, would be performed personally by the bishop, traditionally on Maundy Thursday.² This was also the day when the bishop welcomed back the penitents who had been sprinkled with ashes and ceremoniously ejected from the cathedral on the previous Ash Wednesday. It was in keeping with this tradition that Alnwick instructed a number of the heretics convicted in the diocese of Norwich to appear as penitents at the cathedral on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday for several years after their abjuration.³ The cathedral was also the site of the solemn fustigations of two of the guilty Lollards.⁴ The cathedral's part in the bishop's disciplinary role is emphasised by the fact that it was common practice for his consistory court to be based there.⁵ This was certainly the case in Norwich where the consistory court met usually in the Baucham chapel of the cathedral;⁶ and it seems likely that Lincoln cathedral was used at least sometimes by the bishop's official. Certainly, when in Lincoln, Alnwick's court of audience met in the cathedral.⁷

The bishop's affection for, or at least dutiful regard for, his cathedral and its chapter is revealed, to at least some extent, by

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1. On at least nineteen occasions. See Appendix V.
 2. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, p 103.
 3. *Trials*, pp 23, 25, 40, 43, 65-6, 68, 110, 124, 130, 138, 151, 156, 163, 168, 188, 194-5.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp 23, 188.
 5. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, p 101.
 6. Burnham, p 36.
 7. Court book, *passim*. See also Appendix VI, pp 401-9.

his itinerary.¹ It is clear that he made an effort to be in his cathedral cities for some part of every year and an especial effort seems to have been made to be present to share in the Easter festivities with his chapters.² In discussing how much time bishops spent in their cathedral cities, Hamilton Thompson wrote: 'residence in the palace meant that the bishop, outside his own gates, was on land where his presence might be construed as intrusion or trespass. Thus the splendour of an episcopal palace was not due to the habitual presence of the bishop and his household but to the necessity of large entertainments on special occasions or great festivals when the bishop came in from one of his country seats and exercised hospitality for a few days'.³ This may well be true. Nevertheless, the amount of expense lavished by a bishop on the state apartments of his episcopal palace, together with the attention to detail in his private apartments, may at least indicate both a desire to do honour to the cathedral city and an intention to spend at least a proportion of his time in it.

At Norwich, William Alnwick's contribution to the episcopal palace seems to have been the building of the principal gateway on the north side of the precinct, 'a lofty and magnificent stone pile, vaulted over',⁴ and completed by Bishop Lyhart. Alnwick's additions to the episcopal palace at Lincoln were a good deal more substantial. Two new buildings were erected. One was a three-storey gatehouse which, much restored, still survives with Alnwick's arms mounted at the base of its oriel window. This building adjoined the bishop's chapel range. The latter is now almost totally destroyed, although it is possible to reconstruct it with some accuracy.⁵ The chapel was clearly dedicated to the

1. Discussed below, pp 89-94 . See also Appendix VII.

2. This was in accordance with canon law, which prescribed that it was a bishop's duty to be in the cathedral for the great feasts and during Lent (*Provinciale*, p 130).

3. *Cathedral Churches of England*, pp 165-6. He expressed similar sentiments in *Eng. Clergy*, pp 74-5.

4. Blomefield, vol. III, p 531.

5. For a description of the palace, see T. Ambrose, 'The Bishop's Palace, Lincoln', *Lincolnshire Museums Information Sheet, Archaeology Series*, No. 18 (Lincoln, 1980). See also *Visitations II*, p xxiii. (ctd on next page)

Virgin Mary (the cathedral's patron) as its windows were filled with glass containing fulsome dedications from the bishop to the saint.¹ 'This complex, gate-tower and chapel range, at the time it was built formed up-to-date and convenient accommodation for the bishop'² and was 'designed to provide a measure of comfort and convenience which the older buildings lacked'.³ It seems unlikely that Bishop Alnwick, who as a man of of unknown family probably had little personal fortune, would go to such trouble and expense for merely a few ceremonial occasions. It may be that he had some wish to impress his recalcitrant chapter with such splendour on their doorstep, but it is surely equally likely that the main purpose of the newly renovated palace (with all its comforts) was to provide his home for at least part of the year.

His munificence extended beyond the repair of his own house. His emphasis on the importance of the upkeep of the fabric of the house of God in Lincoln has already been demonstrated.⁴ On making his will in 1445,⁵ William Alnwick left £100 to his successor in case the latter should complain of any dilapidations occurring in the church during his episcopate. This was a fairly normal bequest by one bishop to his successor,⁶ but the rest of this clause in the will smacks of true, if somewhat self-righteous, feeling. He left this £100 'albeit I received from my predecessor by the hands of his executors, only in the first place a hundred marks, and at another time a hundred shillings and a pontifical valued at twenty marks and three small cruets for oil and chrism to the value of forty shillings,⁷ notwithstanding that I found great dilapidation in the buildings of my church and have laid out and spent no small

(ctd) The palace was the subject of a parliamentary survey in 1647 (LAO: BP Surveys 1).

1. *Desiderata Curiosa*, ed. F. Peck, vol. II (1735), pp 32-3. For the text of the dedication, see Appendix II, p 377.
2. Ambrose, 'Bishop's Palace', p 14.
3. *Ibid.*, p 3.
4. See above, pp 41, 47.
5. *Visitations* II, p xxix. Hamilton Thompson's transcription contains some inaccuracies. The original is in LPL: Register of Archbishop John Stafford (1443-52), ff 178v-9v.
6. Cf. Judd, *Thomas Bekynton*, p 162.
7. I.e. a total of £87. Surely, not much less than Alnwick left.

sums of money in their repair and in the construction of new buildings from money procured far beyond the sum for which the rents and revenues of my church of Lincoln, after the victuals and raiment of me and mine had been deducted from the same, could be sufficient, as may clearly appear to anyone who will look into it by my yearly accounts.' But if my aforesaid successor will not be able to be so contented, but is bent on encroaching on my goods through right or wrong, I will that my executors, before they in any wise go beyond the sum defined by me above, spend four hundred pounds in defending themselves and my goods'.

What had these sums been expended on? As the supervision of the cathedral and the administration of the fabric fund was almost entirely in the hands of dean and chapter, there is little real reason for connecting the names of bishops with building work which took place during their pontificates.² A number of additions to Lincoln cathedral have been attributed to the work of Alnwick. Venables³ repudiated the story, originated by Leland, that the west windows were Alnwick's work.⁴ T. Allen⁵ attributed to Bishop Alnwick the erection of the south porch of the cathedral and the building of lead-covered wooden spires on its two central towers. He quotes a description of them as 'the smallest spires I have ever seen; they were beautiful in the distance, yet he doubted whether they ought to have been there, and in fact they are of modern addition, and not of stone, so that on nearer view they disgrace and disfigure the edifice'.⁶ Prints of the cathedral made before the removal of the spires tend to confirm this description. However inferior in quality they were, the suggestion, made in

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1. No longer surviving.
 2. Edwards, *Secular Cathedrals*, pp 123-4.
 3. 'William Alnwick', p 344 and 'The Architectural History of Lincoln Cathedral', pp 159-92, 377-418 in *Journal of the Royal Archaeological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, vol. XL (1883), pp 164-5.
 4. Leland may, perhaps, have been confused by Alnwick's contribution to Norwich cathedral's west window. See below.
 5. *The History of the County of Lincoln, from the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (1834), pp 149, 157, 159.
 6. *Ibid.*, p 157.

1726, that the spires should be removed caused a riot in the city and it was not until 1808 that they finally came down.¹

The only building in the cathedral close which definitely seems to have had some kind of a connection with William Alnwick is the vicars choral's stable (now known as the tithe barn), which has engraved on its east end his arms and a rebus on the name of Canon John Breton. Breton was Alnwick's executor and the arms may commemorate some bequest to the vicars choral. Maddison suggested that the carving was in memory of assistance given by Alnwick to the vicars at the time of their incorporation in 1440.²

If there is no conclusive evidence that Bishop Alnwick contributed materially to the fabric of Lincoln cathedral, he certainly seems to have been generous to its treasury. In 1536, the treasury contained: 'a great cross, silver and gilt, with images...., weighing one hundred twenty-eight ounces, of the gift of William Alnewick; and a foot pertaining to the same, silver and gilt, with two scutcheons of arms and a scripture, "*Orate pro animabus Thome Bewford*," etc.[sic] And the said foot hath a back with six images....weighing eighty-six ounces, of the gift of the said William;....and a staff to the said cross, silver & gilt.... with this scripture, "*Delectare in Domino*" weighing eighty-four ounces'; and 'Item a costly cope of blew velvet with costly orphreys of gold, with images set with pearl, and in the dorse an image of Our Lady with her Son, and four angels, in the hood the Trinity set with pearl and stone, and in the back a large image of the assumption garnished with pearl and stone, with many angels of

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1. J.W.F. Hill, *Georgian Lincoln* (Cambridge, 1966), pp 27, 38-41, 271. It is unfortunate that the suggestion also made in 1726 by the same architect, James Gibbs, that the neglected episcopal palace should be used as a quarry for the cathedral's renovation, was not greeted by a similar outcry.
 2. *Vicars Choral*, pp 10-11. LCS, vol. II, pp cxviii corrects Maddison's dating of this incorporation from November 1441 to 1440. The date mentioned here is 9 Henry VI, translated to 1440. In fact, 9 Henry VI was, of course, 1430. Presumably 9 is a misprint for 19. There appears to be no record of this grant in either *CPR* or the *Calendars of Charter Rolls*.

gold set with pearl, *ex dono Willielmi Alnewike epis*''.''

At Norwich, during Bishop Alnwick's episcopate, the cathedral's cloisters were finally finished,² but the bishop was not necessarily involved with their building. He does seem to have contributed to the building of the great western porch into the cathedral³ which is adorned with his arms, around which are the words '*Orate pro anima Domini Willelmi Alnwyk*'.⁴ This porch was clearly only the start of Alnwick's plans for his first and, one suspects, dearer cathedral. As the cathedral's chronicler recorded he '*fieri fecit ex sua gratia majus hostium occidentali cum fenestra supereminente in Ecclesia cathedrali Norwicensi*'.⁵ This west window was built in accordance with his will, which instructed that if his goods were sufficient, his executors should 'cause to be made at my costs a great window of fit sort above the western entrance in the church of Norwich for the adornment and enlightening of the same church, in stone-work, iron-work, glass workmanship and every other needful material'.⁶ William Alnwick was not unusual among his contemporary bishops in leaving bequests to the cathedral church of a previous diocese,⁷ but this does

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1. *Monasticon*, vol. VI, pp 1280, 1283. Although the images were not unusual, the cope perhaps represented Alnwick's two cathedral churches, Lincoln and Norwich, dedicated respectively to the Virgin Mary and the Holy Trinity. The description of the cross is the longest entry for a cross in the inventory. These perhaps compare with the gifts which gained Archbishop Bowet of York the title of '*pater hospitalis*' (Dobson, '*Later Middle Ages*', p 100).
 2. NRO: DCN 29/2. Liber Misc. 2, f 10: '*et sic completum fuit opus claustr' famosissimi A.D. 1430 tempore Willelmi Alnewick tunc Episcopi ibidem totum vero tempus a principio operis predict' usque ad finem ejusdem fuerunt 122 anni*'.
 3. A. Jessopp, *Norwich Diocesan History* (1884), p 153; Venables, '*William Alnwick*', p 344; *Visitations* II, p xxiii. It is not beloved by enthusiasts for the original Norman architecture of the cathedral.
 4. T. Browne, *Posthumous Works* (1712), pp 24-5 describes images of the bishop that no longer seem to exist.
 5. *Anglia Sacra*, vol. I, p 417.
 6. *Visitations* II, p xxvii.
 7. Rosenthal, '*Careers and Bequests*', analysed the thirty-eight surviving wills of the eighty bishops in England, 1399-1485. Twenty-one had held more than one see and ten of these left bequests to their previous cathedral (*ibid.*, p 126).

seem to have been a particularly munificent bequest, especially as he left only £20 to the fabric of Lincoln cathedral.¹ He may have felt he had done enough for Lincoln. He also asked for his exequies to be celebrated in Norwich cathedral within a month of his funeral. Perhaps to ensure that this request was acceptable to the priory, he left the prior a silver-gilt goblet to the value of £10, to be used by him and his successors for as long as it lasted. He added a bequest of 20d to every monk of the priory who was either present for his funeral rites or excused attendance by the prior because of ill-health; and a pittance and some wine to be shared by the convent on the day of these ceremonies.²

Although he seems to have been rather more generous to the fabric and head of Norwich cathedral than he was to Lincoln cathedral,³ Alnwick followed normal custom by requesting burial in Lincoln cathedral.⁴ He asked to be buried in the nave of the cathedral 'at the place where the bishop makes his station at the time of the procession', thus ensuring that Dean Macworth would not be able to forget him. He asked that his funeral rites should be 'moderate'; and added a schedule of the monies that were to be distributed among those attending the ceremony.⁵ For the next five

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1. *Visitations* II, p xxvi omits this bequest, which occurs in LPL: Register Stafford, f 179.
 2. *Visitations* II, p xxvi. I have been unable to find any reference to these bequests in the Norwich cathedral obedientiary rolls.
 3. There was no chalice for the dean.
 4. Only one of Rosenthal's thirty-eight bishops, Philip Morgan of Ely, did not request such burial ('Careers and Bequests', p 125).
 5. *Visitations* II, p xxv. The money to be paid was as follows: to every poor man coming on the day of the burial or funeral, 3d and 1d to each coming on the seventh and thirtieth days after the funeral; 6s 8d to every canon present at the funeral, 3s 4d to every vicar, 20d to every vicar of the second form, 16d to every chantry chaplain, and 12d to every poor clerk and chorister. His executors were to use their discretion in distributing to any other men of religion who were present and any ministers of the church Alnwick had omitted.

years he asked that his executors should pay an honest priest to celebrate at an altar as near as possible to his tomb for his soul, that of his own benefactor Stephen Scrope, and all the faithful departed.¹ If Bishop Alnwick's will did not exhibit particular affection for Lincoln cathedral, he did at least appoint two of its canons among his executors. However, these were John Breton and Thomas Ryngrstede, men who had served him since his Norwich episcopate.² He did not choose any of Norwich cathedral's monks as executors but this may be explained by the fact that the most obvious candidate, William Worsted, had predeceased him.³

Norwich cathedral priory served its former bishop well. The window he requested was inserted with a reminder to all those passing through the door under it to pray for his soul; and his name was entered in the cathedral's obit lists.⁴ At Lincoln he would have benefited from the chantry masses said daily for the souls of deceased bishops at the altar of St Peter,⁵ and his obit, which the chapter agreed with his executors to celebrate on the nearest available date to the anniversary of his death,⁶ is still remembered.⁷ According to his wishes, he was buried at the west end of the nave.⁸ Sadly, the tomb and its brasses were destroyed when the cathedral was entered by the troopers of the earl of Manchester in 1644.⁹ The only medieval memorial brass which now survives in the cathedral is that of Bishop John Russell (1480-94).¹⁰

1. *Ibid.*, p xxvi.

2. See below, pp 102, 111, 120-1.

3. Although monks were, strictly speaking, not allowed to act as executors (*Provinciale*, pp 166-7), Bishop Brouns appointed the sacrist of Norwich, Richard Walsham, as his executor (Jacob, 'Two Documents', p 431).

4. NRO: DCN 40/11 (register of sacrist), f 7. He appears to have been remembered on 6 December (he died on the 5th).

5. LCS, vol. II, p cclxii.

6. LAO: A 2/34, f 29v - agreement dated 9 December 1452.

7. I am grateful to Nicholas Bennett of LAO for this information.

8. Peck *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. II, p 15. See Appendix II for the inscription.

9. E. Venables and G.G. Perry, *Lincoln Diocesan History* (1897), p 297.

10. D.H. Duke, *Lincoln Cathedral* (Guide Book, 1982), p 20.

The fulsome praises of Bishop Alnwick which were engraved on his tomb may well have been composed by John Breton, who seems to have been the most active and devoted of the bishop's executors. Alnwick originally provided for a chantry of only five years duration. However, in 1461, Breton agreed to lend 600 marks to the dean and chapter who, if they failed to pay it back, were to spend £10 yearly to sustain an obit for Alnwick and to support a chaplain to celebrate for his soul every day.¹ This agreement may have been in preparation for Breton's own death for, in 1465, he instructed his executors² to find, for twenty years after his death, '*unum sacerdotem honestum et bone conversacionis*', not already a vicar or chantry priest in the cathedral, to celebrate for the souls of Breton, Alnwick, Breton's benefactors and all the faithful departed. The residue of Breton's estate was to be spent for the benefit of their two souls, primarily in the building of bridges and roads.³ Breton's devotion to Alnwick was further expressed by his request to be buried '*circa latils et pedibus domini mei singularissimi domini Willelmi Alnewyk*'.⁴

William Alnwick's relations with his two cathedral chapters were thus of a contrasting nature. Those with the Norwich cathedral priory seem to have been cordial and those with the Lincoln cathedral chapter, on occasions at least, fiery. However, both chapters assisted in his diocesan administration to at least some extent. He, in his turn, acted as their patron and attempted to ensure that their life ran on as smooth a course as possible. In composing the *Laudum* Alnwick made a real contribution to the life of Lincoln cathedral. If his *Novum Registrum* was, initially, the cause of more friction than harmony, it exhibited his very real care for the state of his cathedral church. Both documents stand as monuments to his abilities and dedication and are, incidentally, invaluable guides to the customs of cathedral life in the middle

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1. LAO: A 2/34, ff 59, 81.
 2. Who included John Tylney, keeper of the altar of St Peter during Alnwick's episcopate, but now a canon.
 3. A 2/35, ff 96v-8, 170; LAO: D1j 50/2/21.
 4. A 2/35, f 97v. In the event, he received burial at some distance from his patron (Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. II, p 18).

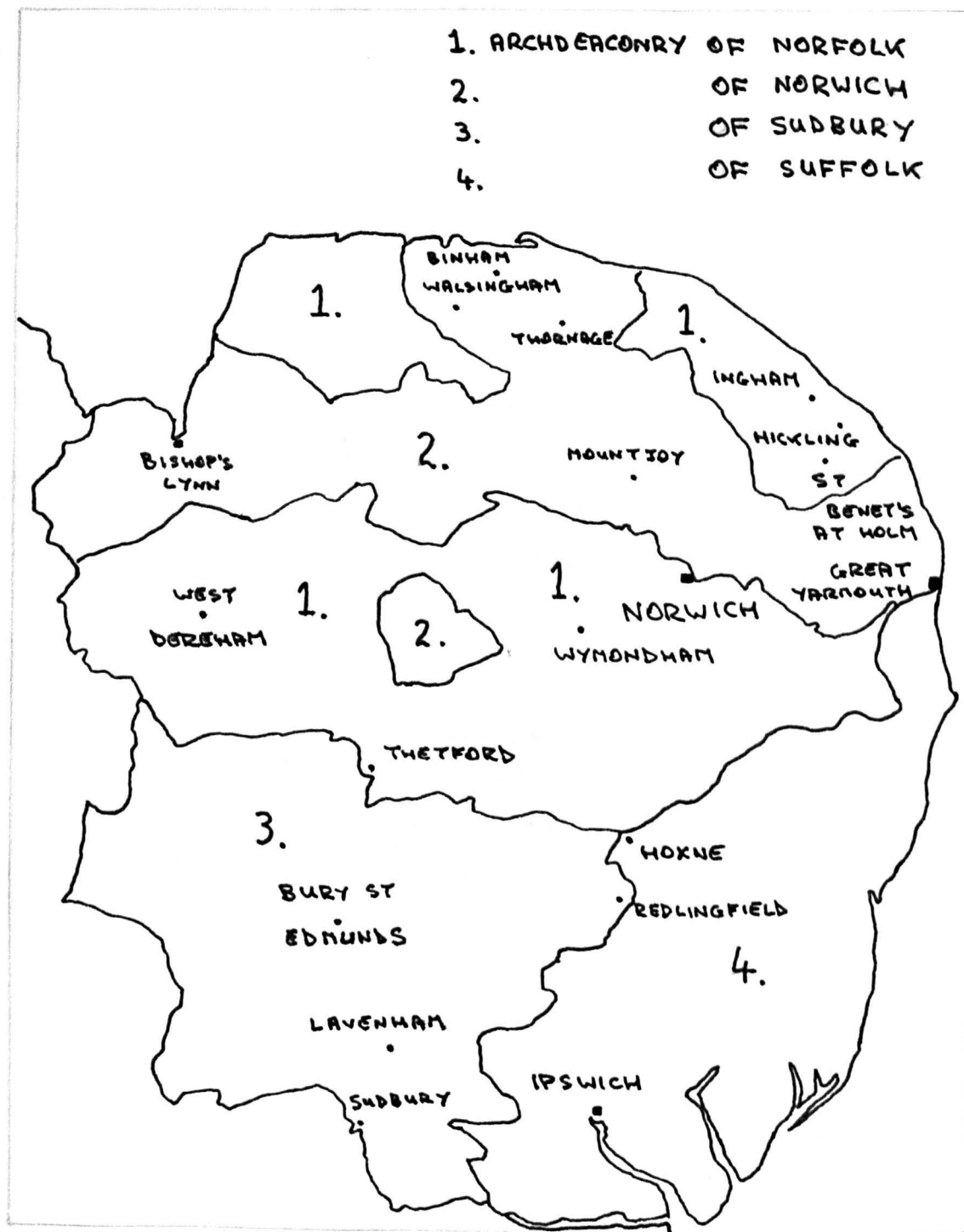
ages. While his own tomb is lost, he left physical memorials to himself in the architecture of both Norwich cathedral and the Lincoln episcopal palace. However, perhaps for him the most precious monument would have been the abiding devotion shown by one of his protégés, John Breton, canon of Lincoln cathedral. In the final analysis, it is tempting to think that something more than common form inspired Dean Macworth and his chapter to inform Archbishop Stafford '*lacrimandens...quod ecclesia Lincolnensis per mortem bone memorie domini Willelmi...iam remanet destituta*'.'

1. LPL: Register Stafford, ff 32v-33 (11 December 1449).

THE DIOCESES OF ENGLAND AND WALES IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY:
ILLUSTRATING THE MAJOR LOCATIONS OUTSIDE THE DIOCESES OF NORWICH
AND LINCOLN OCCURING IN WILLIAM ALNWICK'S ITINERARY



THE DIOCESE OF NORWICH IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY
ILLUSTRATING THE BISHOP'S MAJOR RESIDENCES AND SOME OF THE MORE
IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS HOUSES OF THE DIOCESE



THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN IN THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY
ILLUSTRATING THE BISHOP'S MAJOR RESIDENCES AND SOME OF THE MORE
IMPORTANT RELIGIOUS HOUSES OF THE DIOCESE



III. ADMINISTRATION AND ADMINISTRATORS: WILLIAM ALNWICK
AND HIS ASSISTANTS IN THE DIOCESES OF
NORWICH (1426-1437) AND LINCOLN (1436-1449)

1. William Alnwick and the Dioceses of Norwich and Lincoln

William Alnwick was consecrated bishop of Norwich at Canterbury by Henry Chichele on 18 August 1426.¹ He served this diocese for ten years before being translated to Lincoln.² Bishop Alnwick's dioceses were two of the most populous and therefore the most arduous for a conscientious bishop. Norwich, comprising the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk and a small part of Cambridgeshire, contained some 1360 parishes.³ This was a prosperous part of England,⁴ which had spawned a large number of religious houses, most notably the great abbey of Bury St Edmunds which was exempt from the bishop's jurisdiction.⁵ Conversely, the bishop's twenty manors⁶ were exempt from archidiaconical jurisdiction, as was his town of Bishop's Lynn.⁷ In 1535, Norwich was assessed as twelfth in value of the twenty-one English and Welsh dioceses, with spiritualities worth £234 16s 11d per year and temporalities at £817 8½d.⁸ This compares with the 1291 valuation of the

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, pp 93-4. For the details of his election and provision to both episcopates, see above, pp 25-7.
 2. Indeed there is some overlap; his last recorded act as bishop of Norwich was on 13 February 1437, two months after he had already acted as bishop of Lincoln (*Norw. Reg.*, f 90v; *Linc. Reg.*, f 28, 23 December 1436). The Lincoln register records an exchange approved by the bishop on 2 November (f 146v) and unattributed institutions in October (f 146). Thus Alnwick may have been acting as early as this, but the difficulties of interpreting the register make it unwise to place too much emphasis on this. It is for this reason that Alnwick's episcopates are dated throughout this thesis as 1426-37 and 1436-49. Technically, of course, his Lincoln episcopate did not begin until his receipt of the temporalities in February 1437.
 3. Blomefield, vol. IV, p 553.
 4. See C.B. Firth, 'Some Aspects of the Religious History of Norfolk in the Fifteenth Century', London University M.A. (1910), pp 1-8.
 5. For Alnwick's relations with Bury St Edmunds, see pp 238-56.
 6. Fourteen in Norfolk, five in Suffolk and one, Terling, in Essex (*VE*, vol. II, pp 281-2).
 7. Burnham, p 183. See also below, p 116.
 8. *VE*, vol. III, p 281-2.

temporalities at £666 13s 4d and the spiritualities at only £28.¹ Few accounts survive to assist in assessing the true income of the bishop of Norwich from spiritualities in the years 1426-37.² However, the surviving receiver general's accounts record that in the years 1428-9 and 1429-30, receipts from temporalities were recorded as £597 10s 6½d and £795 11s 5 5¼d respectively.³ This suggests that their true value was somewhere between those estimated in 1291 and 1535.

In purely financial terms, Lincoln was much more valuable than Norwich, and so Alnwick's translation may be seen as a promotion. In 1535, it was the fifth most highly-valued diocese, with spiritualities worth £585 8s 11¼d, and temporalities worth £1510 8s 11¼d.⁴ In contrast to Alnwick's Norwich episcopate, there are no surviving accounts of temporalities for his period as bishop of Lincoln. However, the accounts of his commissary general in the Leicester archdeaconry for the years 1439-43 show spiritual receipts varying between £5 and £45 per year.⁵ In 1499-1500, total receipts from spiritualities were in the order of £600,⁶ some indication of the accuracy of the *Valor Ecclesiasticus*.

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1. *Taxatio Ecclesiastica Angliae et Walliae auctoritate Papae, Nicolai IV circa A.D. 1291*, ed. S. Ayscough and J. Caley (Record Commission, 1802), p 296. The only item counted for spiritualities in 1291, and by later collectors of subsidies, was the bishop's appropriated church at Thornham (cf. NRO: Colman Ms. 8/89: account of the collectors of the 1429 subsidy, f 2v).
 2. Bishop Alnwick's Norwich episcopal register contains, beside the appropriate institution entries, notes of amounts either paid or owed as first fruits by new incumbents. The exact meaning of these notes is unclear (Cf. Jacob, 'Thomas Brouns', pp 70-1). For a recent attempt to elucidate the subject, see R.N. Swanson, 'Episcopal Income from Spiritualities in Later Medieval England: the Evidence for the Diocese of Coventry and Lichfield', *Midland History*, vol. XIII (1988), pp 1-20.
 3. NRO: EST 15/1/1, m 4; EST 15/1/2, m 2.
 4. *VE*, vol. IV, pp 1-7. In 1291, the temporalities were valued at £1,000 and the spiritualities (three appropriated churches) at £108 13s 4d (*Taxatio*, p 295).
 5. LAO: BP Accounts 5. The variations primarily depend upon the income from vacancies of benefices.
 6. LAO: BP Accounts 7.

Lincoln was the most populous English diocese, encompassing Lincolnshire, Huntingdonshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire Leicestershire, Bedfordshire, Oxfordshire, and Rutland, with about half of Hertfordshire forming part of the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. While smaller than the archdiocese of York, it had many more parishes: 1,736 in 1535 as opposed to York's 694.¹ Like Norwich, it contained many religious houses,² including such great foundations as Peterborough, Ramsey, Crowland and, most notably of all, St Albans, which had exempt jurisdiction in a large part of Hertfordshire to the south of the diocese.³ Such responsibility very probably seemed a daunting prospect for any conscientious bishop, even one in the first flush of youth which Alnwick cannot have been by 1436. These large cumbersome dioceses were in marked contrast to the small rich see of Ely, which had been the minority council's first choice for the keeper of the privy seal in 1425.⁴ Nevertheless, it would seem from the available sources that Alnwick rose doggedly, if not magnificently, to the challenge with which he was presented.

It has been suggested that the amount of time that a bishop was resident in his diocese is a useful indication of his conscientiousness.⁵ Was Alnwick an absentee bishop? Certainly, the fact that it took him until 22 December 1427,⁶ over a year after his consecration, to travel to his diocese for enthronement, would not seem to augur well for the rest of his episcopate. He was keeper of the privy seal until February 1432, and his duties on the minority council would not have made it easy for him to spend

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1. M. Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation: the Diocese of Lincoln under John Longland 1527-1547* (Cambridge, 1981), p 4.
 2. Bowker, *ibid.*, has listed 156.
 3. Its value in 1535 was, at £2102 (VE, vol. I, p 451), greater than the whole of the Lincoln diocese and only just less than Ely at £2133 (*ibid.*, vol. III, p 488).
 4. See Appendix I, p 373. As bishop of Ely, Alnwick might have left the impression of a totally different kind of diocesan. He would almost certainly have had more time to devote to political affairs towards the end of his life than his enormous second diocese allowed.
 5. Haines, 'William Gray', p 442.
 6. Norw. Reg., f 9.

as much time as he may have liked in his diocese.' In addition to the time that he spent in London, he was abroad for varying periods in 1427, 1431/2, and 1435.²

However, it is wrong to suggest that Alnwick, in giving up the privy seal in February 1432, 'appears to have turned briefly to his diocese, dispensing for a time with John Wygenhale, his vicar general, and conducting his only ordinations at Norwich'.³ Leaving aside the fact that Wygenhale was not vicar general until 1434,⁴ by 1432 Alnwick had already undertaken ten ordination ceremonies - the first having been on 20 December 1427.⁵ Nevertheless, the sources do seem to indicate that significantly more effort was expended by him in his diocese after relinquishing the privy seal.

It is possible to create a skeleton itinerary for Alnwick with the aid of his registers and other records.⁶ This exercise is not entirely without problems because not only are there many episcopal *acta* which do not record the locations where they occurred, but also there are some combinations of locations which seem so implausible that one is left with doubts about the reliability of the registrar.⁷ However, Alnwick appears to have been in the diocese sufficiently frequently to assert that he was not an habitual absentee during his Norwich episcopate.

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1. For the similar experience of a contemporary episcopal royal servant, see Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 167.
 2. For these periods of service overseas, see below pp 303-5, 325-8.
 3. Davies, Ph.D., p 404.
 4. See below, pp 123.
 5. Norw. Reg., f 121.
 6. *Visitations* II, pp 405-13, gives an itinerary based on the Norwich register. However, as Hamilton Thompson does not cite references for the information he gives, a complete itinerary which adds to his information and records the appropriate sources has been compiled (Appendix VII). See map 1 for major places visited outside his diocese; maps 2 and 3 for those visited within his dioceses (pp 84-6).
 7. E.g. 1435: 29 March, Thorpe (Norw. Reg., f 76); 1 April, Charing Cross (f 76); 2 April, Norwich (f 142v). The Thorpe act is not specifically assigned to the bishop by the registrar. Is it possible that he could have travelled from London to Norwich in one day?

As the main reason for his absences was royal service, it is not surprising that Alnwick was often in London. There, he normally resided in St James's Hospital by Westminster, of which he had been made warden in 1422.¹ This hospital was conveniently close to the bishop of Norwich's own house at Charing Cross,² and, until 1432, episcopal *acta* from London were almost invariably dated there.³ En route to his diocese from London he had a manor house at Terling near Chelmsford. While in the diocese itself, his manors offered him a greater choice of residences. Most often he was at Thorpe, outside Norwich, from where he made frequent forays into the cathedral city. He certainly seems to have made an effort to be near or in Norwich at Easter.⁴ Other favoured residences were Thornage in north Norfolk and Hoxne on the Norfolk/Suffolk border.⁵ Rather surprisingly his town of Bishop's Lynn does not appear to have been visited very often or for very long.⁶ Something of the comfort that William Alnwick expected to find in his houses is perhaps revealed by the £52 16s 4d spent in 1428-9 for the upholstery of furnishings for the bishop's chamber.⁷ The only other places that he visited more than once were Bury St Edmunds, Bungay, Ipswich, Sudbury and Walsingham. Of these, the visits to Bury can be accounted for by his inquest into heresy in the town in December 1428, and the prolonged stay of the young king between Christmas 1433 and Easter 1434.⁸ He visited Walsingham on

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1. Appendix I, p 371. For the history of the hospital in this period, see A.G. Rosser, 'Medieval Westminster: the Vill and the Urban Community, 1200-1540', London University Ph.D. (1984), pp 321-40.
 2. C.L. Kingsford, 'Historical Notes on Medieval London Houses', pp 28-81 in *London Topographical Record*, vol. XI (1917), pp 59-61.
 3. He was in London for short periods at numerous times during his episcopate. See Appendix VII.
 4. This was, of course, in accordance with his obligations in canon law (*Provinciale*, p 130).
 5. It would appear that Hoxne was his preferred summer residence.
 6. He is only recorded as having visited Lynn on three occasions: 18 January 1428, 5-9 December 1432 and 8 March 1436. However, in February 1434, the town was preparing for a visit (*Eleventh Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission* (1887), p 163), and on at least one occasion they sent him gifts of food and wine (*ibid.*).
 7. NRO: EST 15/1/1, m 5.
 8. See below, pp 239-40, 255, 309-10.

three occasions, possibly to inquire into the state of the priory, certainly to hold an ordination service, and perhaps also to pray at the Marian shrine there.¹

Alnwick's commitment to residence and visitation during his Lincoln episcopate has never been doubted. However, it is not always easy to be sure of where he was on what date. This is primarily because the bishop's scribes never recorded who was acting at the time of institutions, the record of which takes up nearly sixty per cent of the register.² The bishop is only recorded as personally acting in collations and in the register's memoranda section. All exchanges are said to have been authorised by him, but this may just have been common form. Given the evidence of the Norwich register for the amount of work undertaken by his vicars general, it is dangerous to assume that all unattributed acts are those of the bishop himself.³ The task of tracing his itinerary is further complicated by the register's arrangement. Whereas the Norwich register is roughly chronological the Lincoln register is totally confused. One is left with the impression that the compiler, having divided a mass of notes by archdeaconry, simply sat down and copied them into the register as they came to hand. This means that if an entry is undated it is very difficult to assign a date to it from those around it. Similarly, there are probably a number of entries which have been misdated, but it is almost impossible to assign correct dates because the register may well, in another place, have correctly assigned very distant dates to entries placed side by side in the register.⁴

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1. 14 January 1428 (Norw. Reg., f 10), 1 April 1430 (f 128v - ordination) and 20 November 1432 (f 58v).
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 80-195.
 3. As Hamilton Thompson did, with reservations, when he compiled an itinerary for the bishop (*Visitations* II, pp xxx-xliii). Again he does not cite references, so the itinerary has been reconstructed afresh (see Appendix VII). In the absence of any direct evidence to the contrary, dates and locations recorded in the register, and other records, have been taken as referring to the bishop unless otherwise stated. For the activities of his vicars general, see below, pp 122-6.
 4. See *Visitations* II, pp xxx-xxxii for a discussion of these problems.

Nevertheless, it is possible to work out something of Alnwick's whereabouts and favourite residences during the episcopate. Despite his less heavy involvement in royal government, he was frequently in London, normally residing at the episcopal palace at Old Temple,¹ and he appears to have been there every year. Similarly, he was in his cathedral city for at least some part of every year. As at Norwich he had a manor, Nettleham, just outside the city's boundary. He may well have preferred to use this for much of his episcopate, particularly while he was in direct dispute with the dean, a period when his palace, despite the modifications he himself made to it, may have seemed too close to the cathedral for comfort. He does seem to have made some effort to be in or around his cathedral city for the church's principal feast of Easter, it being almost certain that he was there for all but two years of his episcopate. The two Easters spent away from Lincoln were 1438, when he seems to have been at Windsor, presumably with the king,² and 1445 which he spent at Lyddington.³

The immense size of the Lincoln diocese has already been commented on. It has been calculated that it took three days hard riding to travel from London to Lincoln at about this time.⁴ Most of this travelling would have been within the bishop's own diocese. The bishop's manors necessarily served as staging posts and as centres for the oversight of the surrounding parts of the diocese. Among the most frequently visited was Buckden, in Huntingdonshire, which was conveniently placed on the Great North Road, and saw its bishop every year of Alnwick's episcopate. Another was Lyddington, a short distance away from the main road in Rutland. This may well have been Alnwick's favourite manor, as it was for a number of other bishops.⁵ It seems certain that Bishop Alnwick undertook at least some alterations to the palace. The windows of the hall contain numerous depictions of his arms (a cross moline) and of his

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1. Kingsford, 'London Houses', p 63.
 2. 13 April (Linc. Reg., f 118). Cf. B. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (1981), p 362.
 3. 17 April (Linc. Reg., f 193v).
 4. Bowker, *The Henrician Reformation*, p 4.
 5. It was 'the favourite resort of Bishop Atwater' (*ibid.*, p 4).

motto '*Delectare in Domino*'. It is even possible that the depiction of a bishop contained in the glass is a portrait of Alnwick himself.' While duty called him to Lincoln for Easter, it may have been inclination which sent him so often to Lyddington for Christmas in the earlier years of his episcopate. In later years, Christmas seems to have been spent in his castle at Sleaford, the fifth of the main centres for his diocesan residence.

Alnwick left money to the churches of all these manors, as he did to the church of the manor of Wooburn Episcopi which served as a base for his travels in the western parts of his diocese.² It is perhaps significant of his relative affection for these manors that his bequests to the churches of Lyddington and Buckden were ten marks and 100 shillings respectively, while Nettleham, Wooburn and Sleaford were each to receive forty shillings.³ At Buckden, at least, good use seems to have been made of his bequest. His arms are still to be seen on the shields held by stone angels acting as corbels in the nave. In addition to these bequests, he also left sets of vestments to the value of twelve marks to each church appropriated to the bishopric, and fifty marks to be distributed among the poor of each such parish.⁴

Despite his frequent visits to London, and occasional forays to other places outside his dioceses,⁵ William Alnwick was clearly not an absentee bishop. Residence in, and even affection for, episcopal palaces may not, of course, be truly indicative of a

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1. C and P Woodfield, 'The Palace of the Bishops of Lincoln at Lyddington', *Transactions of the Leicestershire Historical and Archaeological Society*, vol. LVII (1981-2), pp 1-16; *VCH Rutland*, vol II, pp 188-95. See also *Visitations II*, p xxiv.
 2. He was there for some part of almost every year.
 3. *Visitations II*, p xxvi.
 4. *Visitations II*, p xxvii. That his request was observed in at least one case is indicated in the account of the churchwardens of Thame for 1450-1: 'Item to John Waltan for the bryng a peyr vestmentys of the quest of the Beschope of Lynkole: xijd' (Oxfordshire Record Office Ms. dd. Par. Thame C5, f 14v. I am grateful to Mrs Julia Carnwath for this reference).
 5. He was in Reading in January-February 1440 and Winchester in June-July 1449 at the time of the Parliaments there; and in Cambridge on at least five occasions. See Appendix VII.

bishop's devotion to episcopal duties. However, Bishop Alnwick's presence in his dioceses would have enabled him to have an overview of their administration, and to deal with any major disciplinary crises that might arise.

2. The Administrators of the Diocese

Although Bishop Alnwick would seem to have been frequently resident during both his episcopates, no one man, however conscientious or able, could be expected to administer such large dioceses (or, indeed, any diocese) on his own. By the fifteenth century there had evolved a body of administrators who were able to carry on diocesan business with or without the presence of the bishop.

a) The Ancient Diocesan Divisions: Archdeaconries and Rural Deaneries

In earlier times, the archdeacon had very much been the bishop's chief administrative officer - the *oculus episcopi*.¹ However, by the later middle ages, although the dignity was in the collation of the bishop, an archdeacon was no longer removable at the bishop's will. He had acquired a substantial jurisdiction over his archdeaconry that gave him recognised privileges and revenues which sometimes conflicted with those of the bishop.² By the fifteenth century, the collation of an archdeaconry was often regarded as a reward for services already rendered to the bishop or (often) the king, rather than a commission of further service to the bishop.³ Many archdeacons were so fully occupied by royal or other ecclesiastical business that the archidiaconical tasks were, in the main, undertaken by the archdeacon's official.⁴

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1. For the development of this office, and that of the rural dean, see A. Hamilton Thompson, 'Diocesan Organization in the Middle Ages. Archdeacons and Rural Deans', *Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. XXIX (1943), pp 153-94.
 2. See, for example, Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, pp 84-91.
 3. R.L. Storey, *Diocesan Administration in Fifteenth-century England*, Borthwick papers, no. 16 (York, 2nd edn, 1972), pp 1, 8-9.
 4. Instructions to induct recorded in Alnwick's registers were consistently addressed to the archdeacon 'or his official'. Thomas Langley was thus somewhat unusual in carrying out a visitation in his archdeaconry of Norfolk (Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 16).

The archdeacons of the Norwich diocese' during Alnwick's episcopate were Richard Caudray (Norwich); William Sponne (Norfolk); Thomas Rudborne and Clement Denston (Sudbury); and John Frank (Suffolk).² Rudborne and Caudray were men of some eminence. Rudborne, an Oxford theologian, became bishop of St Davids in 1433; Caudray, a busy royal official under both Henry V and his son, was one of those men who collected valuable benefices without ever attaining episcopal rank.³ Both men probably owed their promotion to royal service, although Caudray, a fellow graduate and later chancellor of Cambridge University and privy seal official under Alnwick, may have owed his preferment to his more personal connection with the bishop.⁴ John Frank derived promotion from his position as master of the rolls.⁵ None of these men would have had much time for administrative duties in the diocese, although Caudray did attend a number of sessions during Alnwick's heresy trials.⁶ William Sponne had served Bishop Wakering as his chancellor and was one of his executors.⁷ Despite his early career in diocesan administration, the only notices of his activities in Alnwick's episcopal records are his appointment as a collector of a subsidy in 1428 and the appearance of his name (together with the other three archdeacons) on a list of the Norwich clergy who were to attend convocation in the same year.⁸ Clement Denston, like Sponne, seems to have spent much of his ecclesiastical career in the Norwich diocese,⁹ and may well have been more closely

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1. For the extent of these archdeaconries, see Hamilton Thompson 'Diocesan Organization', p 166.
 2. *Fasti* IV, pp 26-33.
 3. *BRVO*, pp 1582-3; *BRUC*, pp 126-7.
 4. For the connection between the two men, see Appendix I, p 363, 368. There is no record of his collation.
 5. *BRVO*, vol. II, p 721.
 6. 15, 18 March 1429 (*Trials*, pp 51, 59); December 1428 (Norw. Reg., f 109).
 7. *BRUC*, p 546.
 8. Norw. Reg., ff 98, 99. All the archdeacons acted as collectors of the subsidy granted on the income of stipendiary chaplains in 1430 (PRO: Exchequer: Receipt Rolls (E 401): E 401/724).
 9. Although he collected benefices elsewhere, particularly in London, most notably canonries in St Martin le Grand and St Paul's Cathedral. For his career, see *BRUC*, p 182. For his conflict with the abbot of Bury St Edmunds, see below pp 244-6.

associated with Alnwick's episcopate than any of the other archdeacons. Like Caudray, he was with Alnwick during the Bury St Edmunds proceedings of December 1428.¹ Denston is the only one of the five men who was actually recorded as acting as archdeacon in Alnwick's register: in May 1429, he conducted an inquisition into the circumstances of the institution of William Aiscough into Denston's own former benefice of Risby.²

It is more difficult to identify who held the eight archdeaconries during Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate.³ It would seem that they were held by some fifteen men during the period: Lincoln by Richard Caudray, who held it for the entire period in conjunction with his Norwich archdeaconry;⁴ Northampton by William Gray, the future bishop of Ely; Leicester by Thomas Barnesley, an Oxford graduate;⁵ Buckingham by Thomas Beckington, who was succeeded in 1443 by Master Richard Andrew, a man of similar background who collected numerous benefices during his career while not quite reaching the episcopal heights scaled by his predecessor.⁶ Andrew may have also held the archdeaconry of Huntingdon, for in Alnwick's register he is described as its archdeacon in the list of attendants at John Langton's consecration as bishop of St Davids.⁷ This may very well be a scribal error, but Archdeacon William Lassalls had died by 26 August 1443 and an unnamed successor was inducted on 15 November.⁸ It is more likely that this was Richard Morsby, who was archdeacon by 1447, than Andrew.⁹ Both Lassalls and Morsby were graduates of Cambridge

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1. Norw. Reg., f 109. He was described as archdeacon but this was some four months before he gained the archdeaconry through an exchange with Rudborne for the deanery of the collegiate church of Tamworth (*ibid.*, f 92v).
 2. Norw. Reg., f 93v.
 3. *Fasti* I, pp 6-19. See Appendix IV for corrections.
 4. *Ibid.*, p 7. He had previously held the Bedford archdeaconry as well (*ibid.*, p 17).
 5. *BRVO*, vol. I, p 112.
 6. *BRVO*, vol. I, p 34-5.
 7. 7 May 1447 (Linc Reg, f 67).
 8. LAO: A 2/33, f 44v.
 9. *Fasti* I, p 9. Morsby had been Bishop Gray's chancellor (Reg. Chich., vol. II, p 545).

University, and Lassalls had been its chancellor in 1432.¹ The archdeacon of Oxford until his death was John Southam, a civil lawyer who had been active in diocesan administration during Richard Fleming's episcopate, but whose days of activity seem to have been over by Alnwick's time.² He did not die until 1441 but, according to Alnwick's register, his archdeaconry was vacant in May 1438 and collated to William Lyndwood.³ The editors of the new *Fasti*⁴ have suggested that the entry of the collation is some kind of scribal error. If so, it seems strange that the same error is repeated on the next folio with the recording of a collation of a prebend to John Leek, dated 6 March 1439, vacated by the death of Southam. Perhaps a tentative suggestion may be made that although Southam did not die until 1441, the incurable disease which had secured him a papal indult allowing him to visit his archdeaconry by deputy,⁵ had encouraged the bishop to pre-empt his death. Lyndwood was certainly inducted into the archdeaconry between 14 September 1440 and 14 September 1441,⁶ and probably remained there until his promotion to St Davids in 1442. He was succeeded by Fulk Birmingham⁷ who, as a youthful pluralist, was singled out for criticism by Thomas Gascoigne.⁸ The great canonist William Lyndwood had become archdeacon of Oxford after some years as archdeacon of Stow, where he was replaced for a short period by Master William Scrope, bachelor of both laws. It is not surprising that Alnwick should avail himself of an opportunity to patronise this nephew of his own first patron.⁹ Shortly afterwards, Scrope exchanged his archdeaconry for the prebend of Stow Longa with Peter Irford, a Cambridge theologian, and confessor of John, duke of Bedford.¹⁰

1. *BRUC*, pp 353-4, 410.

2. *BRUC*, vol. III, p 1732. He was a benefactor of Lincoln College.

3. *Linc. Reg.*, f 107.

4. *Fasti* I, p 14.

5. *BRUC*, vol. III, p 1732.

6. *LAO*: Bj 2/12, f 5v.

7. Inducted between 14 September 1442 and 14 September 1443 (Bj 2/13, f 19).

8. *Loci e Libro*, pp 14, 52. Birmingham's name is never mentioned by Gascoigne. The identification is his editor's.

9. *BRUC*, vol. III, pp 1660-1.

10. *BRUC*, p 328. See Appendix IV, pp 385, 391.

Able though these men undoubtedly were, the only archdeacon who can really claim to have served Alnwick in diocesan administration was Robert Thornton, to whom he collated the archdeaconry of Bedford in 1439 on the death of William Derby.¹ References to the archdeacons in Alnwick's register, except as the anonymous recipients of mandates to induct, are extremely rare. The only other notices of their activities are the recording of the presence of the archdeacons of Huntingdon, Oxford, and Bedford during the negotiations between the bishop and the cathedral chapter in 1438-9;² that of Huntingdon at the consecration of John Langton;³ a dispute between the archdeacon of Buckingham and the bishop's commissary over jurisdiction;⁴ and a couple of references to the archdeacon's duty to publish archiepiscopal constitutions.⁵

All the archdeacons, in both of Alnwick's dioceses, would have had officials who very probably carried most of the burden of archidiaconal administration. It is therefore unfortunate that (apart from mandates for induction) there is very little evidence as to the identity and activities of these officials. Clement Denston, who had been official of the archdeacon of Sudbury before becoming archdeacon,⁶ is more well known than anyone else who held the position in the dioceses of Lincoln and Norwich during Alnwick's episcopates. In October 1429, the official of the archdeaconry of Norfolk seems to have been Master Robert Erpyngham an advocate of the Norwich consistory.⁷ He was probably the unnamed official of the Norfolk archdeaconry who conducted an inquisition into the patronage of a benefice in February of the same year.⁸

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1. Linc. Reg., f 107v. For his administrative work, see below, pp 114-6, 125-6.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 10.
 3. *Ibid.*, f 67v.
 4. *Ibid.*, f 76.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 33, 41.
 6. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, pp 355, 364.
 7. Norw. Reg., f 36
 8. *Ibid.*, f 30. A similar commission was received by the official of the archdeacon of Norwich in 1432 (*Eleventh Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission*, p 163).

References to the same officials in the Lincoln register consist of a citation of Master 'J.A.', official of the Lincoln archdeaconry, for failing to promulgate a constitution;¹ a mandate from the bishop to the same (unnamed) official to summon the clergy of the diocese to discuss a subsidy;² a commission to the Northampton and Bedford officials to oversee the purgations of criminals;³ and the part taken by Master Richard Fowey, rector of Towyn and Richard Andrew's official in the archdeaconry of Buckingham, in the dispute between Andrew and the commissary of the bishop in the same archdeaconry.⁴ The fact that the officials whose names are known seem to have been graduates would indicate something of the importance attached to their position. Much necessary routine work was probably proceeding under their supervision, but the scarcity of the sources makes it impossible to say much more.

The level of ecclesiastical administration between the archdeacons and the parishes was the rural deanery. Where the archdeaconry often coincided with the county, rural deaneries were groups of parishes, which in these two dioceses often coincided with the hundred of secular administration.⁵ The office of rural dean did not entail the cure of souls and the appointment was usually of a temporary nature, possibly rotating between the incumbents of a locality.⁶ The Norwich diocese was unusual in that deans held a freehold benefice from which they could not be removed without just cause. They were frequently used as commissaries by both bishops and archdeacons to conduct investigations and cite witnesses; and in the diocese of Norwich they were entitled to the probate of lesser wills when the deceased had goods in a single deanery.⁷

1. Linc. Reg., f 41.

2. *Ibid.*, f 55.

3. *Ibid.*, f 42v. The official of the archdeacon of Northampton was John Lychbarow (CUL: Peterborough Ms. 2, f 4). See p 119.

4. Linc. Reg., f 76. These disputes seem to have been avoided at a slightly later date by the combining of the two posts of commissary and official. For Fowey, see *BRUO*, vol. II, p 713.

5. See Hamilton Thompson, 'Diocesan Organization', pp 180-3.

6. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 67-9.

7. Burnham, pp 179-82.

Bishop Alnwick's Norwich register contains no record of the work undertaken by these rural deans, but it does record collations of deaneries. Between 1426 and 1437, fifteen men received collation of fifteen deaneries in nineteen collations. The rank of one of these men is not described. Eleven were merely described as clerks. Only three were described as priests (one of whom, John Breton, was described as 'clerk' when first mentioned). This lack of priests would seem to reinforce the view that these benefices carried no cure of souls. Only one, Master Simon Thornham, who received collation of the Brook deanery in 1436, was a graduate.¹ Three men received more than one deanery although none held in plurality. These were John Fyket (Dunwich and Repps), Richard Pyke (Thetford and Walsingham), and John Breton (Dunwich, Hingham and Waxham). Fyket, Breton, and Thomas Holden and Thomas Bullok, who also received deaneries,² were all clerks of the bishop's household.³ It would thus seem that he used the rural deaneries as a source of income for his junior protégés.

An interesting revelation of the Norwich probate register for Alnwick's episcopate is the existence of a subsidiary group of 'vice-deans'. There is no information as to their status or responsibilities, but they seem to have been used fairly frequently to administer the goods of intestates dying in their areas.⁴

Apart from the recorded use of the seals of various deans on the certificates of citations produced in a lengthy matrimonial case,⁵ there is little evidence of the actual work of the deans in the diocese of Norwich during Alnwick's episcopate. In contrast,

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1. Norw. Reg., f 82v. He was a bachelor of civil law. Emden has no note of him. The other collations are recorded in Norw. Reg., ff 34v, 38v, 62v, 68, 81v, 82v, 86, 88, 94, 95.
 2. *Ibid.*, ff 35, 39v, 45v, 56.
 3. See below, pp 110-11.
 4. NRO: Will Reg. 'Surflete', Part I (relating to administration of intestacy), ff 3, 4, 5, 9v, 11, 14v, 15, 18, 21, 21v. One of these men, Master John Troket, vice-dean of Lynn (f 11) seems to have been a graduate, which indicates that the position was of some importance.
 5. NRO: REG. 5/10, Thomas Brouns [*sic*], ff 113-21.

there survive no records of the appointment of deans in the diocese of Lincoln, but the records do reveal some of the tasks they performed for the bishop. Their most regular employment was in citing offending parties to appear before the bishop or his commissaries,¹ and they were frequent recipients of the bishop's *ad hoc* commissions.

The dean of Hertford was commissioned to sequester the fruits of the church of Ayot St Lawrence which had fallen into disrepair through the negligence of its incumbent; while the sequestration that the dean of Holland was called on to perform arose from an intestate death.² The dean of Yarborough was commissioned to recall a vicar to residence.³ It needed the two deans of Rutland and Stamford to denounce as excommunicate William Howes and all who had killed Walter Throkynham, rector of Holwell. The more routine task of induction during the vacancy of the archdeaconry of Oxford was assigned to the two deans of Bicester and Norton.⁴

It is thus clear that Alnwick could, and did, use those holding the ancient offices in the dioceses to assist in the exercise of his ordinary jurisdiction. Nevertheless, no matter how well the offices of archdeacon and rural dean functioned in the localities, the bishop was in need of qualified assistants, at the centre of diocesan administration, to help him carry out his episcopal duties while he was present, and to perform them for him in his absence.

1. Linc. Reg., ff 48v-9, 50v-51, 72v; Court book, *passim*.

2. Linc. Reg., ff 40, 63.

3. *Ibid.*, f 57.

4. *Ibid.*, ff 31, 173. This recorded vacancy (early 1442) militates against the arguments given above (p 99) in favour of William Lyndwood's exercise of the office of archdeacon.

b) The Bishop's Personal Assistants

The men most intimately connected with the bishop's day to day life were those who lived in his household and accompanied him on his journeys - his *familia*. It is not easy to estimate the size of Bishop Alnwick's own household, but it has been suggested that the households of Bishops Arundel of Ely and Langley of Durham may have been as large as 100 people.¹ Durham and Ely were unusually wealthy but it is perhaps fair to imagine Bishop Alnwick as surrounded by assistants and servants numbering more than fifty. Of these, a core of clerks assisted in episcopal administration.

The official who has perhaps most influenced our perception of the episcopal administration was the registrar. He was head of the bishop's secretariat which issued the bishop's commissions and letters of dispensation, and was responsible for the compilation of his register.² Because many episcopal acts had to be drawn up in the form of public instruments, the registrar was normally a notary public. Alnwick's Norwich registrar, John Exeter, was no exception. He was a citizen of Norwich, a married clerk,³ who served Bishops Wakering, Alnwick and Brouns in succession. It is difficult to guess how much of the actual writing of the records was his work, but his influence on the record-keeping of the diocese in the first half of the fifteenth century was probably considerable. He himself always took great pains to point out the part he played in the bishop's work.⁴ He seems to have prospered

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1. Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, pp 165-261; Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 92.
 2. Storey, *Diocesan Administration*, p 43.
 3. It was, in fact, uncanonical for a married man to be employed as registrar (*Provinciale*, p 128). However, in the fifteenth century, this was a rule more honoured in the breach than in the observance (C.R. Cheney, *Notaries Public in England in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries* (Oxford, 1972), p 81). Bishops who employed married clerks as registrars included Beckington (Judd, *Thomas Bekyngton*, p 114) and Arundel (Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, p 77).
 4. Norw. Reg., *passim*, and *Trials*, *passim*. He attended every session of the heresy proceedings except one, when he was in attendance on the bishop for an ordination ceremony. What seems like obsessive recording of his own presence is perhaps merely a reflection of the necessary (ctd on next page)

in his work as on his death in 1447 he left bequests worth £100 in cash in addition to an unspecified amount of land.' The will which illustrates his prosperity also reveals the existence of a wife, Isabella, who predeceased him, a son, Robert, and a grandson, Andrew. One of his executors was Thomas Storm, '*clerico meo*'; evidence of the fact that Exeter, although clearly pre-eminent in the bishop's registry, did not work alone.

The registrar of the Lincoln diocese during Alnwick's episcopate was Thomas Colstone, notary public, and registrar to the bishops of Lincoln for the whole of the first half of the fifteenth century.² He, too, had a wife, but had been dispensed to act as registrar despite his marriage.³ Colstone's role is much more evident in the visitations records⁴ than the episcopal register, and it is somewhat surprising that a man of his experience produced such a confused and confusing register. Perhaps by the time Alnwick came to Lincoln, Colstone was past his best. Perhaps, also, the strain of managing the paperwork of such a large and unwieldy diocese was too much for the staff appointed in the bishop's registry.⁵ Colstone did not act alone; indeed the name of John Bugg, another notary public, appears more frequently in the register than Colstone's. Bugg was often in attendance for formal diocesan acts, most notably institutions of clergy, and he acted as a proctor for the new incumbent on at least forty

(ctd) training in authentication of a notary public. However, Exeter is one of the very few officials whose character seems to be revealed at all through the records. E.F. Jacob, 'Thomas Brouns', discusses his career at more length. Jacob considered that Exeter was chiefly responsible for the writing as well as the compilation of the register (Cf. Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 169: he doubts that registrars actually wrote the register).

1. NRO: Wills Reg. 'Wylbey', f 107. Composed 26 August, proved 6 October 1447.
2. *Visitations I*, p x. Thompson describes Colstone's hand as 'beautiful, if somewhat too minute' (*ibid.*, p xlv).
3. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. IV, p 215.
4. *Visitations I* and II, *passim*.
5. See above, p 92, for more comments on the disorder of the register. Nicholas Bennett (LAO) suggests that the organisation of the registry was severely disrupted during the long hiatus caused by the difficulties following the provision of Bishop Fleming to York in 1423/5. He may well be right.

occasions.¹ A third notary public, who seems to have deputised when the other two were not available, was Thomas Thorpe. He appeared nineteen times in the visitation proceedings and acted as a proctor for institutions on at least ten occasions.² If these three men did not create such immediately attractive records as John Exeter, they did at least ensure the survival of a substantial amount of information about the formal activities of their master.

While the main function of the registrar was to produce and conserve episcopal records, he also served the bishop in both legal and financial business. John Exeter and Thomas Colstone both assisted the bishop by collecting depositions from witnesses, in Exeter's case during heresy proceedings and in Colstone's during the visitation of religious houses.³ By the end of the century, the registrar of the bishop of Lincoln also acted as receiver of the bishop's spiritualities.⁴ It would appear that Bishop Alnwick's registrars also served him thus. The notation of payments of first fruits beside the record of institution in his Norwich register seems to indicate that Exeter was receiving this payment.⁵ More concrete evidence is furnished by the account of the commissary general of Leicester, who was on several occasions acquitted of payment already made to Thomas Colstone.⁶

While the registrar might assist the bishop in legal matters, his principal personal legal assistant was the chancellor, the most senior official of his household. Originally he had been in charge of the bishop's secretariat. 'In the fifteenth century, however,

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 88v, 93v, 95, 96v, 183v, 188, 188v, etc.. The other notaries public who accompanied the bishop (see below, pp 110-11) also frequently acted as proxies at institutions (Norw. Reg., *passim*; Linc. Reg., *passim*).
 2. *Visitations* II, p 419 and *passim*; Linc. Reg., ff 113v, 118v, 121, 122, 123, 127v, 132, 142, 165v, 183, 192.
 3. *Trial*s. pp 71, 73, 75, 89; *Visitations* II, *passim*, especially p 211. See also B.L. Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts in the Diocese of Canterbury* (Oxford, 1952), p 38.
 4. LAO: BP Accounts 7.
 5. For a discussion of what these notes might mean, see Jacobs, 'Thomas Brouns', pp 70-1.
 6. LAO: BP Accounts 5.

the chancellor was the foremost of the bishop's *jurisperiti*, a graduate if not a doctor in law, who was always at hand to advise the bishop on questions of canonical procedure'.¹ There is no evidence of the existence of a chancellor during Alnwick's Norwich episcopate. Storey² describes how, by the sixteenth century, this office became detached from the bishop's household and was frequently joined with that of the official principal. In the absence of any evidence that Alnwick had a separate chancellor, it is possible that this union of offices had happened by the time he became bishop of Norwich. Indeed, William Bernham, Alnwick's official principal, had formerly held the position of chancellor³ and so may well have combined the two offices.

In the Lincoln diocese, Alnwick's chancellor was John Depyng, a notary public and Cambridge graduate in civil law.⁴ He had served Bishop Fleming as early as 1421 and was Alnwick's almost constant companion, and occasional substitute, during the visitations of the religious houses. During Alnwick's dealings with the Lincoln cathedral chapter, Depyng, although himself a canon of the cathedral, acted for the bishop in citing his fellow canons to appear and in proroguing sessions.⁵ He also witnessed the bishop's *acta* on a number of occasions.⁶ Other actions undertaken for the bishop were: receiving the certificate of an incumbent's dispensation to hold benefices in plurality; proceeding in the augmentation of a vicarage; and depriving an incontinent vicar of his benefice.⁷

However, perhaps the most important role of the chancellor, and others of the bishop's *jurisperiti*, was in presiding over the bishop's court of audience when the bishop could not, or did not

1. Storey, *Diocesan Administration*, pp 4-5.

2. *Ibid.*, p 5.

3. Foxe, vol. III, p 584.

4. *Visitations* II, pp 5, 40, 418 and *passim*; *BRUC*, p 183 gives his highest degree as licenciate but he is described as doctor of laws in Linc. Reg., f 61v. See also *Visitations* I, p 190; *Eng. Clergy*, p 94.

5. Linc. Reg., ff 50v-51, 55v.

6. E.g. *ibid.*, ff 44v, 47v, 48v, 61v.

7. *Ibid.*, ff 36v, 63, 66v.

wish to, do so himself. The remaining fragment of Alnwick's Lincoln court book¹ reveals something of their activities in the last years of Bishop Alnwick's life. While the bishop himself seems to have dealt with the most important and difficult cases, he only presided over thirty of the 220 cases when the president of the court was recorded, although he may well have been the judge on some of the many occasions when the judge's identity is not known.²

For those cases which he did not have the time, inclination or indeed the strength to deal with,³ he seems to have relied on a small team of able and trusted deputies. Four men, between them, presided over at least 175 cases. John Depyng presided over at least nine cases between 1440 and September 1445, shortly before his death.⁴ He seems to have been replaced for a short time by John Leek, licentiate in canon law, canon of the cathedral and Alnwick's commissary general in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.⁵ He presided on several occasions in the short period between June and November 1446. He, in his turn, seems to have been replaced by Thomas Balscot, doctor of canon law, later the bishop's vicar general, and one of Alnwick's two main judicial deputies. This man may perhaps be identified with the canon of Wroxton priory who acted as scribe of the acts of the general chapter of Augustinian canons at Osney in 1443.⁶ In 1443, the latter was a licenciate in

1. See above, pp 7-8.

2. See Appendix VI. These 220 cases were considered on something under 200 dates. This surely indicates something more than the light work implied in D.M. Owen, 'Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in England 1300-1550: the Records and their Interpretation', pp 199-221 in *Studies in Church History XI*, ed. D. Baker (Oxford, 1975), p 201.

3. It should perhaps be stressed again that the surviving records date from the last years of his life.

4. *BRUC*, p 183: 'Died by Oct 1445'. He probably presided on very many more occasions, but as has been noted above (p 8) there are very few records of cases before 1446.

5. *BRUC*, p 361 for the main outline of his career. He did not die until 1462 and may well have overseen more cases than are recorded here. His position, however, seems to have been inferior to that of the other three.

6. *Chapters of the Augustinian Canons*, ed. H.E. Salter, OHS, vol. LXXIV (1922), p 85.

canon law, who had earlier been granted a papal licence to hold a benefice.¹ In favour of the argument for this identification² are the combination of these qualifications with a relatively unusual name, and the fact that, almost alone of Alnwick's leading legal servants, he failed to receive collation of a cathedral canonry. Against the proposition are the facts that he is never once described as a canon in any of the records, and that after his master's death he retired not to his convent but to the cathedral close. There, on his death in 1454, his goods were sequestered by the cathedral chapter until his testament could be exhibited and proved.³ Whatever the truth of his origins, his eminence amongst Alnwick's legal assistants is undoubted. Balscot presided over sixty-four cases in the three years from January 1447 until the bishop's death in December 1449.

The only judge to exceed Balscot's contribution was John Derby, doctor of civil law and canon of Lincoln.⁴ In a career which seems to have run parallel to those of the other three men discussed, Derby presided over no less than eighty-three cases in the period from September 1444 until Alnwick's death. It was, no doubt, a recognition of his ability and sterling service to the dead bishop which ensured his appointment as official of the see *sede vacante* after William Alnwick's death.⁵ The enormous contribution made by these four men is emphasised by the fact that, between them, the other commissaries (who included Robert Thornton and Richard Dykolun, the official-principal and his coadjutor), acting *in loco episcopi*, only presided over a handful of cases.

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1. CPL, vol. IX, p 217 (23 September 1441).
 2. Emden, *BRUC*, vol. I, p 100, follows Hamilton Thompson, *Visitations* II, p 396.
 3. LAO: A 2/34, f 46v. He is described as 'the venerable man Master Thomas Balscott doctor of canon law recently dead in the close'. It was uncanonical, if not unknown, for a member of a religious order to make a will (*Provinciale*, p 166). He received collation of a rectory in 1449 as 'Master Thomas Balscot, doctor of decrees, priest' (Linc. Reg., f 195).
 4. See *BRUC*, p 184 for his career. He seems a marginally more likely successor to Depyng as bishop's chancellor than Balscot.
 5. Churchill, *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. II, p 246; LPL: Register Stafford, ff 32v-3.

In addition to these leading assistants, the bishop, and the *jurisperiti* themselves, might call on any one of the numerous clerks, many of them notaries, who were part of, or visiting, his household, to act as witnesses and assistants. This is vividly illustrated by the heresy proceedings at Norwich in the years 1428-31. The Norwich heresy court book names forty people who 'assisted' the bishop at one time or another, and fifty who were 'present', of whom thirteen also assisted. Thus a total of at least seventy-seven people witnessed at least some of the trials.¹ Those most frequently in attendance were, apart from John Exeter, William Bernham, the bishop's vicar general and official principal, who was to replace Alnwick as the presiding judge for the last few sessions (1430-1); William Worsted, the prior of the cathedral convent, whose theological learning was to be of particular assistance to Bernham;² John Thorpe, the eminent Carmelite; Thomas Ryngstede, dean of the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields, Norwich; William Aiscough, the future bishop of Salisbury; John Bury, bachelor of canon law; John Blitheburgh, Thomas Rodeland and William Bamburgh, priests; Thomas Walsham, clerk; and several notaries public: John Sutton, Hugh Acton, John Wylly and Robert Aylmer, a proctor of the Norwich consistory court.³ The archdeacons of Sudbury and Norwich, Clement Denston and Richard Caudray, appeared twice and three times respectively.⁴ Alnwick's suffragan, Robert Ryngman, assisted only once.⁵

No single trial held before Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln court of audience was of such importance as these heresy proceedings. This is reflected in the relatively lowly stature of his assistants there. Those most frequently noted as present, both in his court of audience and during his monastic visitations⁶ were John

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1. *Trials*, *passim*. See also Appendix VI for a chronology of sessions and presiding judges.
 2. Foxe, vol. III, pp 599-600. See also above, pp 65-6.
 3. Sutton and Wylly later became canons of Lincoln (*Fasti* I, pp 20, 110)
 4. Norw. Reg. ff 108-109v; *Trials*, pp 163-8.
 5. *Trials*, p 175.
 - 6 See *Visitations* II, p 419 and *passim*.

Colstone,¹ John Depyng junior, clerk,² Thomas Holden, priest,³ Masters John Malyns and Thomas Thorpe, notaries public who both acted as scribes of the court,⁴ and John Walbrond, also a notary.⁵ Among other men who attended more than one session of Bishop Alnwick's court of audience were Master William Alnwick, prebendary of Buckden, John Bevves, priest, John Breton, and Gregory Byrkes. Three of these men had lived as boys in Alnwick's household when he was bishop of Norwich. His receiver general's account recorded that in the years 1428-30 William Alnwick, John Breton, Thomas Bullok, Thomas Holden and John Fyket, were clothed, fed, barbered and schooled at his expense.⁶ Four of these boys had received their board from the college of St Mary in the Fields. The fifth, William Alnwick junior, received his board at the cathedral priory,⁷ perhaps an indication that he was a favoured relative of the bishop. All, except Alnwick, had been rural deans in the diocese of Norwich,⁸ as had John Malyns.⁹ Gregory Byrkes was a kinsman of William Estfield, the eminent London mercer, who may well have placed him in the bishop's household.¹⁰ It would seem that, as bishop of Norwich, Alnwick had collected together a small core of protégés who were to accompany him to Lincoln and repay his early patronage by playing minor roles in the exercise of his jurisdiction.

The bishop's own financial records no longer survive for his Lincoln episcopate. However, the money expended in tips in 1438-9 by the new abbot of Peterborough is an indication of the size and influence of his household: to the clerks of his chapel, 26s 8d; to the registrar and his clerks, 33s 4d; to the bishop's chaplain, marshall, cellarer and chamberlain, 6s 8d each; to the bishop's six

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1. Thomas' son?, who was present on seven occasions.
 2. Three times - presumably a relation of the bishop's chancellor.
 3. Four occasions.
 4. Each present nine times.
 5. Fifteen times.
 6. NRO: EST 15/1/1-2.
 7. EST 15/1/2, m 4.
 8. See above, p 102.
 9. Norw. Reg., f 88.
 10. LPL: Register Stafford, f 140v. Estfield left 10 marks to Byrkes, '*cognato meo commorant' cum episcopo Lincoln*'.

esquires, 20s; to his twelve valets, 20s; to his nine boys, 9s; to the clerks of the bishop and the chancellor, 2s 8d; to the stable boys, 40d; and to the kitchen boys, 12d.' If it is difficult to identify all these people, it is at least possible to guess who some of them were.

c) Central Diocesan Administration

The prime function of the bishop's *familia*, essential as it was to diocesan administration, was to accompany and assist the bishop. Few, if any, bishops² could spend all their time within their diocese devoting all the energies of both themselves and their *familia* to their administration, and William Alnwick, as has been seen, was no exception. He, like any of his colleagues, needed a core of trusted administrators working permanently in his diocese.

(i) Permanent Officials

The bishop's senior permanent official was the official principal.³ He was in charge of the bishop's consistory court and was frequently used for *ad hoc* commissions. He was also the man most commonly appointed as vicar general in the bishop's absence. William Bernham,⁴ who combined these offices for most of Alnwick's episcopate, was a bachelor of canon law who spent his entire career in the Norwich diocese. He had been Bishop Wakering's official principal and had served Archbishop Chichele as keeper of spiritualities during the Norwich vacancy. He was, therefore, the obvious candidate for the post and, accordingly, Alnwick appointed him on 19 August 1426, the day after his own consecration.⁵ The

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1. CUL: Peterborough Ms. 2, f 4. Published in *English Historical Documents, 1327-1485*, ed. A.R. Myers (1969), pp 93-5.
 2. Bishops Thomas Spofford of Hereford and Edmund Lacy of Exeter seem to have been possible exceptions to this rule.
 3. See especially, *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, pp 438-42; *Eng. Clergy*, p 51.
 4. For his career, see *BRUC*, p 57.
 5. Norw. Reg., f 18.

commission describes Bernham's duties: he was granted the power of hearing and proceeding in all cases, either instance or *ex officio*, in the consistory court between or against the bishop's subjects. He was also empowered to hear all cases brought to the court by appeal or devolvment, and to correct the crimes, defects and excesses of the bishop's subjects, clerical and lay. He was granted complete jurisdiction over the wills and testaments falling within the bishop's jurisdiction;¹ and he had the power of sequestrating the goods of the bishop's subjects in cases permitted by law. In fact the power of correction did not, strictly, belong to a bishop's official² Nevertheless, Bishop Alnwick was not unusual in including such authority in the commission to his Norwich official.³

Although Bernham was replaced as vicar general in 1434 by John Wygenhale, he seems to have continued as official principal until the end of Alnwick's episcopate.⁴ While Alnwick's Norwich register reveals a great deal about Bernham's activities as vicar general, there is very little mention of him as official. Indeed, the only four references to him as official, apart from his commission, are: the admission of a priest to a chapel in the cathedral;⁵ the mention of his authority in connection with the appointment of penitentiaries;⁶ a mandate to ensure the payment of a pension;⁷ and a commission to install the cathedral's new prior in 1436.⁸

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1. I.e. those of people holding goods within the diocese in more than one archdeaconry, plus all the gentry, nobles and clergy not holding goods in more than one diocese.
 2. Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation*, p 218. Lyndwood, whose own experience was as official of the court of Canterbury and was thus substantially different from that of most episcopal officials, clearly stated that the role of the official was in '*cognitio causarum...non tamen inquisitio, nec correctio, sive punitio criminum...*' (*Provinciale*, p 104).
 3. The officials of Bishops Arundel, Langley and Waynflete of Ely (1374-88), Durham (1406-37) and Winchester (1447-86) all had similar powers (Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, pp 53-82; Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 173; Davis 'William Waynflete', p 104).
 4. In fact the two men acted together in an important marriage case at the end of 1436 (NRO: REG. 5/10, ff 113-121).
 5. Norw. Reg., f 45v, 22 April 1431.
 6. *Ibid.*, ff 101-103v.
 7. *Ibid.*, f 114v.
 8. *Ibid.*, f 87v.

These commissions did not necessarily reflect on his role *qua* official. The only remaining source for his activity in the consistory court is the will register known as 'Surflete' which covers the period of Alnwick's episcopate. The administrative text is all common form and much of it is heavily abbreviated. Not much can be revealed about Bernham's methods or attitudes.² There were, however, a number of occasions when he asserted the bishop's rights over those of an archdeacon by cancelling probates which he saw as encroaching on the bishop's jurisdiction.³ Most of the work was done, not surprisingly, in Norwich but he made regular journeys to Ipswich,⁴ and also visited Hoxne.⁵ As these movements to Ipswich continued after he ceased to act as vicar general in 1432, it would seem that his mobility was a function of his position as official principal. The regularity with which the Ipswich dates appear would seem to imply that he held sessions of the consistory court there in the spring and autumn of each year. Nevertheless, the normal site for the consistory court was Norwich cathedral. The record of an institution held '*in loco consisteriali infra ecclesiam cathedralem Norwicen*',⁶ as well as confirming this fact, reveals the identity of two of Bernham's assistants: Master Robert Erpyngham, and Master John Bury, respectively advocate and examiner general of the consistory court.⁷

In contrast to William Bernham, very little evidence remains of the activities of Alnwick's Lincoln official, Robert Thornton.⁸ No

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1. After the name of the first testator. The register is in a very poor condition and much is missing from the first and last few folios including the name of the official on the title page (NRO).
 2. Indeed his name is never even mentioned.
 3. Will Reg. Surflete, part 2, ff 13, 53.
 4. *Ibid.*, part 1, ff 1, 4v, 6v, 12, 14v; part 2, ff 1, 31, 91v.
 5. *Ibid.*, part 2, f 91.
 6. Norw. Reg., f 36.
 7. Bury, a bachelor of canon law, was rector of Swaffham Market, Norfolk, until his death in 1434 and had served Wakering as vicar general in 1425 (*BRUC*, p 112). No reference to Erpyngham (who seems to have been an archdeacon's official - see above, p 100) has been found in *BRUC* or *BRUO*.
 8. For his career and benefices see *BRUO*, vol. III, p 1868 and *Visitations* I, pp xviii, p 60n. He seems to have been brought from London by Bishop William Gray. (ctd on next page)

record of his appointment has survived, but he was official by the time of the bishop's primary visitation of the cathedral in October 1437.¹ He received several commissions from the bishop, including being instructed to confirm the election of the prior of Fineshade.² He was present from time to time during the bishop's monastic visitations, where he always seems to have been in an inferior position to John Depyng.³ Although the evidence of Thornton's activities is limited, there is eloquent testimony to his usefulness to Alnwick. In September 1447, he seems to have expressed a wish to retire. Alnwick would not revoke his previous commission but, understanding Thornton's enormous burden, he appointed an assistant to act with him.⁴ This was Richard Dykolun, a canon lawyer, who was to succeed him as official and became known as 'a man most desevedly respected' within the diocese.⁵

The lack of obvious prominence of the official in Lincoln diocesan administration is perhaps a reflection of the fact that the consistory court of Lincoln only seems to have exercised jurisdiction over instance cases. It had by this date, unlike the Norwich consistory court, apparently surrendered its jurisdiction over correction and with it, perhaps, involvement in the kind of cases which would have most exercised the interests of the bishop.⁶ By this date, disciplinary cases which were not dealt with by the bishop's court of audience had devolved to another group of permanent officers in the shape of the commissaries general. This office had grown out of that of the sequestrators, whose function had been the sequestration of the goods of those dying intestate,

(ctd) It may thus be dangerous to identify him with the Lincoln cathedral chapter clerk of 1414, see above, p 67.

1. See above, p 35. Linc. Reg., f 37v.
2. Linc. Reg., f 133v.
3. *Visitations* II, pp 171, 284-5, 198, 418. He is never called the official in this record.
4. Linc. Reg., f 73v; LCS, vol. III, pp 532-3.
5. *BRVO*, vol. III, p 2171-2; *Ingulph's Chronicle of the Abbey of Croyland with the Continuations by Peter of Blois and Anonymous Writers*, trans. and ed. H.T. Riley (1854), p 416.
6. C. Morris, 'A Consistory Court in the Middle Ages', *JEH*, vol. XIV (1963), pp 150-9. But see Linc. Reg., f 66 where Thornton seems to have been acting *qua* official in a case of spiritual incest against the vicar of Sleaford (July, 1445).

and of neglectful or criminous incumbents. Out of these functions had developed some jurisdiction over probate, and a more general disciplinary role.¹

The office of corrector or commissary general had developed in Norwich despite the fact that the Norwich official principal, unlike his Lincoln counterpart, had retained jurisdiction over correction. On the same day (19 August 1426) as Alnwick appointed William Bernham as official principal, he commissioned as his corrector or commissary general William Sekyngton, a bachelor of both laws.² The powers and duties allotted to him were the correction and punishment of crimes committed by both laity and clergy within the diocese; the enforcement of clerical residence and punishment of clergy letting their benefices out to farm without licences; the sequestration of goods of the deceased whose probate belonged to the bishop, and the probate of wills and administration of the goods of those who came under the bishop's jurisdiction but whose wills were not specifically reserved to the bishop or his official principal; and the collection of Peter's Pence and sinodalia and punishment of those failing to pay. Sekyngton combined this office with that of official of the jurisdiction of the bishop's manors, which gave him similar powers in those locations.³ Thus Sekyngton had, under Alnwick, extensive authority throughout the diocese. Similarly, also on 19 August 1426, Alnwick appointed John Frank, bachelor of canon law, as official of Bishop's Lynn.⁴ His duties were analogous to those of Sekyngton in the rest of the diocese.

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1. Storey, *Diocesan Administration*, p 7; C. Morris, 'The Commissary of the Bishop in the Diocese of Lincoln', *JEH*, vol. X (1959), pp 50-65.
 2. Norw. Reg., f 18. The title 'corrector' was peculiar to the Norwich diocese (Burnham, p 191). Although Sekyngton is mentioned in neither *BRVO* or *BRUC*, it would seem that he was a Cambridge graduate: '*volo quod unus presbyter secularis bone et honeste conversacionis inveniatur de bonis meis in studio Cantabrig' ita quod studeat in iure canonico vel in theologica et volo quod semel in anno veniat ad locum sepultur' mee et ibi dicat exequias mortuorum cum missa*' (NRO: Will Reg. 'Brosyard', f 227).
 3. Norw. Reg., f 18v (commission also dated 19 August 1426).
 4. *Ibid.*, f 18v.

There is not much surviving documentary evidence of any of these tasks being performed. There is the occasional note in the probate register indicating that Sekyngton should be informed of the names of executors of wills; and there is a recording of his probate of a will which was subsequently brought before the bishop.¹ More interesting is the only other reference to him in the register: he acted for the bishop in releasing the church of St Peter's Dunwich from appropriation by the priory of Eye, which had been neglecting its duties to the parish.² By far the largest number of references to him are in his capacity as inductor for all benefices within the jurisdiction of the bishop's manors.³ Although Sekyngton has not left much trace in the records of Alnwick's episcopate, he is remembered in the cathedral, where he requested burial on his death in 1460.⁴

While the office of corrector general was entrusted to one man in the diocese of Norwich, in the enormous diocese of Lincoln there were several commissaries general with jurisdiction in specific areas of the diocese.⁵ For most of Alnwick's episcopate, the archdeacons of Northampton and Leicester had their own commissary general, while three more men acted in the combined archdeacons of Lincoln and Stow, Bedford and Huntingdon, and Oxford and Buckingham.

Alnwick's Lincoln register contains the full text of only one appointment of a commissary general. This is the commission of John Leek, bachelor of canon law, as sequestrator principal and commissary general in the archdeacons of Huntingdon and Bedford

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1. NRO: Will Reg. 'Surflete', f 184v; Norw. Reg., f 116.
 2. Norw. Reg., ff 107v-8. It is not clear, unfortunately, from the text whether Sekyngton was acting in his official capacity or as a special commissary of the bishop.
 3. Norw. Reg., ff 34v, 39, 42v, 45v, 53v, 54v, 58, 63v, 66, 74, 77v, 84, 86v, 91v, 92.
 4. Will Reg. 'Brosyard', f 226v.
 5. For the development of the office, see C. Morris, 'The Commissary of the Bishop in the Diocese of Lincoln', *JEH*, vol. X (1959), pp 50-65.

(2 March 1437).¹ Leek was granted powers of correction over the bishop's subjects in the archdeaconries; probate and administration of their wills and sequestration of their goods; investigation into non-residence and sequestration of churches farmed out without licence; the duty to take the oaths of canonical obedience of all officials, rural deans and incumbents in his area of jurisdiction; and the power to appoint sequestrators and apparitors general in single deaneries. By 1444, Leek's jurisdiction would seem to have been only in the archdeaconry of Huntingdon. In acting on the bishop's commission to cite the executors of Sir John Cornwall in January 1444,² he had acted with Master William Edward, the bishop's commissary in the archdeaconry of Bedford.³ At about this time, Leek was also commissioned to publish Archbishop Pecham's constitution '*Ignorancia Sacerdotum*',⁴ which commanded parish priests to give their parishioners regular instruction in the basic tenets of the Catholic faith - perhaps a sign of the concern Bishop Alnwick had for the well-being and orthodoxy of his flock.

Oxford and Buckingham seem, like Huntingdon and Bedford, to have been combined under one commissary for most of Alnwick's episcopate. Walter Sandwich, a bachelor of both laws, held the commission from at least 1438, when he was commissioned to inquire into an appeal for a village to be allowed to move its burial ground, until 1444 when he was ordered to grant the administration of a will to its executors.⁵ It is possible that the two commissions had split by 1448 when John Crosby, Sandwich's successor,⁶ appears to have had a jurisdictional dispute with the archdeacon of Buckingham.⁷

1. Linc. Reg., f 28v. He had already served Bishop Gray in this capacity (*Visitations* I, p 91).

2. Linc. Reg., ff 52.

3. Perhaps the same as BRUC, p 206. He was still acting as commissary in July 1450 (Bedford County Record Office: Preston and Redman List, no. 187).

4. Linc. Reg., ff 51v-2.

5. Linc. Reg., ff 34, 50. He may have resigned his commission when appointed advocate of the court of Arches in April 1444 (BRUC, vol. III, p 1640).

6. BRUC, vol. I, p 517.

7. Linc. Reg., f 76. The court of Canterbury was dealing with the litigation and seems to have favoured the commissary's case.

The one pair of archdeaconries to remain united under one commissary general was that of Lincoln and Stow. The first commissary general appears to have been Master John Proctor, who was commissioned to inquire into the patronage of a church in 1437.¹ He seems to have been succeeded by John Smeton, bachelor of canon law, who was active between 1444 and 1446.² His successor was John Sutton, bachelor of civil law, probably the man who had been quite prominent as a notary public during Alnwick's Norwich episcopate.³ In 1447, he was commissioned to inquire into the pollution of a cemetery by bloodshed, and also to act in a union of benefices.⁴

Leicester and Northampton archdeaconries seem always to have been treated separately by William Alnwick. John Lychbarow, a graduate of both laws, who had been Bishop Gray's commissary general in both archdeaconries,⁵ was commissary general in Northampton.⁶ There is an undated note of the commission of Master Henry Langar⁷ for the Leicester archdeaconry. Despite this the only man recorded as acting in this position was Master John Wardale, who was commissary general from at least 1438⁸ until 1444.⁹ Wardale is of particular interest because of the survival of his account roll for the years 1439/40 to 1442/43.¹⁰ This reveals not only the fact that Bishop Alnwick undertook a

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1. Linc. Reg., f 29v. He died by 27 October 1444 when his prebend of Welton Ryvall was collated elsewhere (f 111).
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 1v, 53v. He was treasurer of the cathedral at the time of his death (by 19 December 1448, f 109). Neither man is mentioned in *BRUC* or *BRVO*.
 3. See above, p 110.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 68v, 70. He received collation of the cathedral prebend of Stow-in-Lindsey in 1446 (f 110) and outlived Alnwick. See *BRVO*, vol. III, p 1821.
 5. *Visitations* I, p 34.
 6. Linc. Reg., f 67v. See *BRVO*, vol. II, p 1164.
 7. Linc. Reg., f 59. He was the archdeacon's official at the same time that Wardale was commissary (LAO: BP Accounts 5, m 7), a fact which argues against the suggestion that these posts were usually combined (see Morris, 'The Commissary', pp 62-3). See also *Visitations* II, p 174.
 8. *Visitations* II, p 390.
 9. Linc. Reg., ff 43v, 48, 53v-4. See *BRVO*, vol. III, p 1981.
 10. LAO: BP Accounts 5.

visitation of the archdeaconry in 1440-1,¹ but also the commissaries' routine activities: dealing with wills and intestates; correcting faults; and receiving pensions due from appropriated churches and the fines charged for their dismissal to farm. The commissaries' role in correction is also illustrated by the cases that seem to have come from their courts to the bishop's court of audience, and by the number of people who claimed in his court that they had already been corrected by one or other of his commissary generals.² Thus it would seem that in his commissaries general, one for the whole of the Norwich diocese and half a dozen or so covering the localities of the Lincoln diocese, Bishop Alnwick had appointed the eyes, ears and hands which absentee archdeacons, once the *oculi episcopi*, could no longer be.

These, then, were the major permanent appointments that William Alnwick made to assist him in the exercise of spiritual jurisdiction in his dioceses. Parallel to this was the administration of the bishop's temporalities. If the sources for the bishop's ecclesiastical activities are somewhat less full than one might wish, the evidence for his temporal administration is almost non-existent. As far as is known, there are no surviving records for the temporalities of the bishops of Lincoln for the period of Alnwick's episcopate (1436-49). The account roll of John Fuller, reeve of the manor of Buckden for 1451-2³ reveals that John Walpole was '*nuper supervisor domini Lincoln*', so it is probable that this man, who had been a notary public of the Norwich consistory court and received a prebend in Lincoln cathedral in 1441, had served Bishop Alnwick in this capacity.⁴

The Norwich receiver general's accounts for 1428-30 provide a clearer view of temporal administration in that diocese. The most important figure revealed is, of course, the receiver general himself. This was Thomas Ryngstede, a bachelor of canon law, who

1. *Ibid.*, m 2.

2. Court book, pp 47 (Skayman); 54, 63, 82, 96 (Sutton); 98 (Wardale); 12, 25, 39, 40 (Leek); 79 (Smeton).

3. LAO: BP Accounts 1.

4. *BRUO*, vol. III, pp 1968-9. See also *Visitations* II, p 257.

seems to have been one of Alnwick's closest associates throughout his episcopal career.¹ As well as serving him in this capacity, Ryngrstede acted for him against the recalcitrant prioress of Redlingfield;² and attended many of the heresy hearings of 1428-31.³ In Norwich, he was rewarded for his service by the deanery of the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields.⁴ He accompanied Bishop Alnwick to Lincoln where he received two canonries in the cathedral,⁵ and his final service to the bishop was to act as his executor.⁶ Although the account is Ryngrstede's, he is not the only official it reveals. Others of note were: John Mannyng, the bishop's chief steward, who had authority over all manorial ministers;⁷ John Bernard, subseneschal of the court in Norfolk and auditor of the account; Thomas Cros, subseneschal of the bishop's court in Suffolk; William Norwich, the bishop's attorney in the court of Common Pleas;⁸ John Frevyll, keeper of the gaol at Bishop's Lynn; John Pulleyn, keeper of the bishop's palace; and any number of parkers of the bishop's manors.⁹

The administrators of the bishop of Lincoln's temporalities cannot be similarly identified. It is, however, possible that Richard Quartermain, the man with whom Alnwick was later to join in founding a guild at Thame, served him as steward of that manor.¹⁰ Whoever his colleagues were, it is clear that beneath the edifice of the bishop's administration in both dioceses was a whole

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1. Alnwick was thus perhaps somewhat old-fashioned in employing a clerk in financial administration (cf. Heath, *Church and Realm*, p 315). The receiver general of Bishop Waynflete was a layman (Davis, 'William Waynflete', pp 181-4).
 2. Norw. Reg., f 104. See below, p 259.
 3. Norw. Reg., f 109. *Trials*, *passim*.
 4. Norw. Reg., f 91; see also *BRUC*, pp 499, 500.
 5. *Fasti* I, pp 42-49; *ibid.* XII, p 21, is incorrect to delete his degree.
 6. *Visitations* II, p xxix.
 7. He was appointed on 1 July 1426 (Norw. Reg., f 97v) after Alnwick had received his temporalities but before his consecration (*HBC*, p 262).
 8. Among the foreign expenses recorded for 1428-9 are 17s 4d expended by him 'in bribus' (EST 15/1/1, m 6).
 9. *Ibid.*, m 5.
 10. *The Stonor Letters and Papers, 1290-1483*, ed. C.L. Kingsford, vol. II, Camden Society, 3rd series, vol. XXX (1919), p 93. Quartermain died as steward in 1477.

substratum of minor, often lay, officials without whom diocesan administration could not have functioned.

(ii) The Bishop's Temporary Officials

All the officials discussed above would have been necessary for the administration of the diocese, whether or not the bishop was resident. To this group should be added the men whose assistance was necessary when the bishop could not exercise his own office. The most powerful official in the bishop's absence was, without doubt, the vicar general. In the first instance, this had been a temporary appointment to cover all episcopal acts which did not require episcopal orders when the bishop was absent from his diocese. Initially, commissions were issued on each occasion when the bishop was leaving his diocese and would lapse on his return. However, by the time Alnwick became bishop of Norwich, it was quite normal for a senior clerk to receive a commission at the beginning of the episcopate and to continue in post (with his authority lapsing while the bishop was present) until either his commission was withdrawn or the bishop died.¹ In 1426, it was clear that Alnwick's commitments as keeper of the privy seal meant that he would frequently be absent from his diocese. Consequently, one of his first acts as bishop was to commission a vicar general.²

It was not unusual for the office of vicar general to be conferred on the official principal, and certainly Alnwick's first vicar general, William Bernham, held both posts. His commission, dated from Canterbury on 19 August 1426, gave him power to receive oaths of canonical obedience; to concede letters dimissory; summon synods and convocations of clergy; to absolve from suspension, excommunication and interdict; to examine and confirm or annul elections of officers of religious houses, and install or order the installation of the elected; to issue dispensations for oratories; to investigate and authorise exchanges of benefices; to admit, institute, arrange for the induction of and receive oaths of

1. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 46-56, 187-200.

2. *Norw. Reg.*, f 17v.

canonical obedience from those presented to benefices; to deal with those either occupying or deserting benefices without licence; to receive criminous clerks from secular judges, incarcerate them in the bishop's prison and arrange for their compurgation; to receive and return royal writs addressed to the bishop; and to do all other things pertaining to his office. It has been stated¹ that the Norwich vicars general were also granted the episcopal powers of collation, visitation and dispensation according to the constitution '*cum ex eo*' which allowed clergy to absent themselves from their benefices for purposes of study. However, in Bernham's commission (and that of his successor)² all these powers were specifically reserved to the bishop.

Bernham was thus placed in a position of considerable authority, an authority which he seems to have exercised until early in 1432, when Bishop Alnwick resigned the privy seal. For the next two years, Alnwick was to take diocesan administration into his own hands. In May 1434, when he again felt the need to appoint a vicar general, although Bernham continued to serve as official principal, this time Alnwick's choice fell on John Wygenhale, alias Saresson. This doctor of canon law was another Cambridge man who spent most of his career serving the Norwich diocese.³ Although it is more difficult to tell from the register when Wygenhale was acting as vicar general than it is for Bernham, it seems fairly certain that Wygenhale served Alnwick in this capacity until the end of the episcopate.⁴

The vicars general seem to have used the Norwich episcopal palace as the base for their activities, and most acts were dated

1. Burnham, pp 18, 21, 26-7.

2. Norw. Reg., f 69.

3. *BRUC*, p 655. The close association between the two men is indicated by Bernham's legacy to Wygenhale of a set of vestments and a rosary (NRO: Will Reg. 'Doke', ff 227-8).

4. He was one of Alnwick's executors. He was not the same man as John Wygenhale, abbot of West Dereham, as has been claimed (e.g. Blomefield, vol. VI, pp 191-2; Knowles *Religious Orders*, vol. II, p 143; etc.). This is proved by the appearance of the abbot as a witness in a case heard by the vicar general (NRO: REG. 5/10 (Brouns), ff 113-21).

from there (often from the palace chapel) or simply from Norwich.¹ Other sites used in Norwich were William Bernham's vicarage of St Stephens;² the registrar's office within the bishop's palace;³ and the site of the consistory court within the cathedral itself.⁴ On one occasion Wygenhale used the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields,⁵ of which he was then a canon and later dean. The place outside Norwich most regularly visited by the vicar general was Ipswich. Both Bernham and Wygenhale were there regularly, often at the priory of Holy Trinity.⁶ Other places used by Bernham included Bury St Edmunds⁷ and Blofeld, where he was rector.⁸ Because of some confusion between Wygenhale's and the bishop's acts, his itinerary is more difficult to trace, but he received the profession of the new prioress of Blackborough in her own conventual church,⁹ was at Yaxham in April 1436,¹⁰ and at Bishop's Lynn in May of the same year.¹¹ It thus seems fairly clear that apart from what may well have been regular twice yearly visits to Ipswich, the vicars general and diocesan administration were very much based at the bishop's palace in Norwich.

By far the most prominent (if not the most important) part of their work was in connection with institutions to benefices. Both men oversaw an enormous number of institutions, a large proportion of which involved exchanges, during their terms of office.¹² Connected with this responsibility was Bernham's commission to the archdeacon of Norfolk's official to inquire into the rights of

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1. Norw. Reg., ff 8-53, 69v-90, *passim*.
 2. Norw. Reg., ff 105v, 15, 109v-111.
 3. *Ibid.*, f 12.
 4. *Ibid.*, ff 33v, 36, 47.
 5. *Ibid.*, f 73v.
 6. Norw. Reg., ff 20, 27v (October 1426 and 1427); 14, 28v (May and October 1428); 36, 42v (October 1429 and 1430); 76v, 83v (May 1435 and 1436)
 7. 20 August 1426 (*ibid.*, f 19).
 8. 4-5 September 1427, and 18 June 1428 (*ibid.*, ff 27, 15).
 9. 1 September 1434 (*ibid.*, f 71v). In this he seems to be acting as the bishop's special commissary rather than *ex officio*.
 10. *Ibid.*, f 83.
 11. *Ibid.*, f 84.
 12. Norw. Reg., *passim*. The proportion of exchanges seems to be about one in five (cf. P. Heath, *The English Parish Clergy on the Eve of the Reformation* (1969), pp 44-7). See Table 1.

patronage at North Creake,¹ and his annulment of the institution of one John atte Madwe to the rectory of Metton.² He had falsely claimed that his predecessor had resigned.

The vicars general frequently acted for the bishop in the collation of benefices, although the incumbent was always the bishop's choice.³ They also regularly confirmed elections to offices in religious houses and collegiate churches.⁴ Further involvement with the bishop's role in overseeing monastic life was their appointment of confessors for houses of nuns.⁵ There is no evidence of their issuing letters dimissory, licences for oratories or summons to diocesan synods. They did, however, receive special commissions from the bishop, to examine the election and install the prior of the cathedral;⁶ and to act in the union of benefices.⁷

While the vicars general of the diocese of Norwich, particularly Bernham, are prominent figures in the records of Alnwick's Norwich episcopate, it takes considerable investigation even to identify their counterparts for the diocese of Lincoln in 1436-49. There are no commissions of vicars general and only three instances when one was even mentioned in Alnwick's Lincoln register. At the beginning of his episcopate he followed his Norwich precedent of using his official principal as vicar general. Robert Thornton is recorded as having acted as vicar general on two occasions. In May 1437, he commissioned John Proctor, commissary general in Lincoln and Stow, to inquire into the circumstances of a presentation.⁸ Two months later he commissioned the bishop of Dunkeld to bless the newly elected abbot of Woburn.⁹ Both acts are dated at Stamford which may well have been a convenient central

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1. February 1429 (Norw. Reg., f 30).
 2. November 1429 (*ibid.*, ff 36v-7).
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 8v, 11v-12v, 19, 21-22v, 24, 32, 46, 47v, 48-9, 53 (Bernham); ff 69v, 70, 76v (Wygenhale).
 4. *Ibid.*, ff 19v, 25v, 26v, 27, 8, 15, 30v, 35v, 37, 40v, 43, 46v, 45v-50, 51v (Bernham); ff 71v, 87v, 88v-9 (Wygenhale).
 5. *Ibid.*, f 103.
 6. Norw. Reg., ff 8, 27v.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 46v-47v, 113v-4.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 29v-30.
 9. *Ibid.*, f 31.

position in the diocese for the vicar general to work from.' By the time of the next recorded act of a vicar general, Thornton had been relieved of some of the burden of his tasks as official principal,² so it is not surprising to see that a new man was acting. Between March 1447 and November 1448, Thomas Balscot is recorded as acting as vicar general in proceedings against Dean Macworth, proving a Boston will and acting for the bishop in the union of two benefices in Blatherwycke.³

The paucity of records relating to vicars general for the Lincoln diocese make it very difficult to come to much of a conclusion about Alnwick's use of them during his second episcopate. It would seem, however, that there was nothing like the long term commissions he employed at Norwich. Apparently, he used the office for short periods at the beginning and end of his episcopate: at the beginning, when he was finding his feet in the diocese and unable to spend much time in it; and at the end when his own strength may have been failing.

The vicars general, like the officials principal and commissaries general, although exercising a large proportion of their bishop's power, seem to have reached the heights of their careers by serving in these offices. Although they acquired a number of benefices in Alnwick's dioceses (Thornton, in Alnwick's time, and Wygenhale, after his death, reached the position of archdeacon), they cannot be compared with the kind of clerk (like Caudray and Alnwick himself) who collected 'fat' benefices merely as a means of enriching themselves. Rather, these officials were the men who ensured that the wheels of ecclesiastical administration revolved smoothly, and the whole church thus depended on them.

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1. It seems possible that the series of unattributed acts dated at Stamford for the period April 1437 - 8 July 1438 were acts of Thornton as vicar general (*ibid.*, ff 115, 115v, 116, 163v, 117, 147, 147v). This contention is supported by instances of acts at London for the same dates; it seems likely that these were carried out by the bishop.
 2. See above, p 126.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 70v, 73v, 20-21v.

There were some diocesan tasks that even the most conscientious official could not perform because they required episcopal orders. From the early fourteenth century, the employment of suffragan bishops to undertake those tasks that the diocesan was either too busy, or not inclined, to perform was common. As is well known, these suffragans were usually friars provided to titular sees either in Ireland or '*in partibus infidelium*'.¹ Alnwick was thus following a well established tradition when he appointed a suffragan bishop alongside his other officials for the diocese of Norwich on 19 August 1426.² The man chosen was Robert Ryngman (a Franciscan), bishop Gradensis.³ Little or nothing is known of Ryngman before he appeared as a suffragan, but, as he had already performed some ordinations during the vacancy after Wakering's death, he was, perhaps, the obvious choice.⁴

Alnwick's commission to Ryngman explained his own commitment to royal service, and then enunciated the suffragan's duties. These were to be the confirmation of the bishop's baptised subjects; the reconciliation of churches and chapels polluted by blood; the reconciliation of churches, chapels, cemeteries and altars suspended by the vicar general; the consecration of portable altars, chalices, vestments and other church ornaments; and the ordination of those with sufficient title.⁵ His appointment was to be during the bishop's pleasure and it is clear he was only to act as instructed by the bishop or vicar general.

By far the most important component of the suffragan's role seems to have been the task of ordination. There were fifty-nine recorded ordinations during Alnwick's Norwich episcopate, of which

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1. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 48-9; D.M. Smith, 'Suffragan Bishops in the Medieval Diocese of Lincoln', *Lincolnshire History and Archaeology*, vol. XVII, pp 17-27.
 2. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 18v, 118.
 3. This has been identified as Grado in Italy (Burnham, p 140) but is more likely to have been Gardar in Greenland (Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. II, p 375).
 4. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, p cv.
 5. This reflects the norm for such commissions (*Eng. Clergy*, pp 200-6).

Ryngman performed twenty-nine. Ordinations took place regularly at the four 'Ember Saturdays': the Saturday after the Exaltation of the Cross (14 September), the Saturday after the feast of St Lucy (13 December), the first Saturday in Lent, and the Saturday in Pentecost week; plus the Saturday before Passion Sunday (*Sitientes*) and Holy Saturday.¹ Ryngman officiated at seven ordinations (all in the Norwich palace chapel) between September 1426 and December 1427, when Alnwick undertook his first ordination in the church of the Dominicans at Thetford.² Between 1428 and 1431, Ryngman officiated at fifteen out of twenty-four ordinations. His predominance changed in 1432, when Alnwick retired temporarily from royal service. Between March 1432 and March 1434, all thirteen services were performed by Alnwick. His re-entry into politics is signalled by the fact that from then until the end of March 1436 he only presided at seven out of fourteen ordinations.

The Norwich ordination lists are testimony not only of the service rendered to Alnwick by Ryngman, but also to the fact that Bishop Alnwick was willing to undertake the more routine burdens of his office when freed from governmental commitments. They also reveal that while Bishop Ryngman confined his activities in the main to the bishop of Norwich's own palace chapel,³ Bishop Alnwick himself officiated wherever he might happen to be. On nineteen occasions that was in his own cathedral church, but he also used the parish churches attached to his manors at Hoxne and Thornage, as well as the churches of Thetford (Dominican) and Babwell (Franciscan) friaries, Lavenham parish, Walsingham priory, the college of St Gregory at Sudbury and his own palace chapel at Norwich.

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1. *HBD*, pp 59-61. This was in accordance with canon law (H.S. Bennett, 'Medieval Ordination Lists in English Episcopal Registers', pp 20-34 in *Studies Presented to Sir Hilary Jenkinson*, ed. J. Conway Davies (1957), p 21).
 2. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 118-121. For the dates, places and officiants at ordinations, see Appendix V.
 3. Only twice did he ordain elsewhere: 3 April 1428, in the parish church of Scoulton (his own benefice?), and on 27 March 1434 in Mountjoy Priory.

It has been suggested that the required examination of candidates for ordination 'was too perfunctory and superficial to be more than a scandalous waste of time'.² However, the Norwich ordination lists, while not providing much information additional to the names and titles of ordinands, do give some hint of some of the investigations of a candidate's background that Bishop Alnwick and his assistants did in fact undertake. The ordination lists contain four certificates of manumission,³ thus witnessing to the requirement that the clergy should be free. Perhaps most interesting is the note beside the name of Simon Skynner, candidate for the priesthood in March 1432, of the bishop's instruction '*de continuando scolae tam in cantat quam in gramatica*'. This is perhaps an indication of Alnwick's concern for the level of education among the clergy.⁴ Similarly, the case of the married deacon John Nowers⁵ indicates that in the Lincoln diocese during Bishop Alnwick's episcopate, the correct form at least was being observed; for Nowers himself admitted '*se subisse examinacionem a magistro Johanne Depyng pro habilitate sua*'.

There is no record of Ryngman performing any of the other tasks he was commissioned to do, although he did assist at one session of Bishop Alnwick's heresy trials.⁶ It is clear that while he performed an invaluable function in deputising for Alnwick at ordinations, and was maintained in his position by Alnwick's successor, he was not one of the inner circle of the bishop's administration.

There is no record of a general commission to a suffragan bishop for the Lincoln diocese during Alnwick's episcopate, and no ordination records at all,⁷ so it is not possible to compare the

1. *Provinciale*, p 33.

2. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 15.

3. Norw. Reg., ff 120v, 135, 141, 144.

4. Norw. Reg., f 137v; providing an impression reinforced by his legacies for their education. See below, pp 135-6.

5. Court book, pp 99-102; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 222-6. See pp 181-2, 397.

6. *Trials*, p 175.

7. The Nowers case is almost the only record of ordination performed by the bishop. See Appendix V for (ctd on next page)

dioceses directly. There are, however, a very few specific commissions which enable one to glimpse the work of suffragans which did not concern ordination. William Gunwardby, bishop of Dunkeld, had been commissioned as suffragan by Alnwick's predecessor, William Gray, in 1431, and he continued to be active in the Lincoln diocese until 1454.¹ His value to Alnwick is indicated by the collation of the vicarage of Cople, Bedfordshire to him in December 1441,² but the register reveals only three occasions when he was employed. On 15 July 1437, and in December 1441, he was commissioned to bless the newly elected abbots of Woburn and Warden.³ Less routine, perhaps, was his commission, issued in June 1442, to reconcile the churchyard of Aubourn.⁴

Thus, as William Alnwick needed vicars general to cope with his absences during his Norwich episcopate, and the sheer size of his Lincoln diocese, so, it seems, he employed suffragan bishops to assist in his sacramental duties. That he dispensed with both vicar general and suffragan when secular duties did not detain him away from the Norwich diocese is clear. The nature of the Lincoln records is such that it is impossible to make such categorical statements for the later period, but it may be significant that one of the few recorded acts of the vicars general is the commissioning of the suffragan. How much more he used them it is impossible to tell, but his record of residence in the diocese of Lincoln would seem to indicate that such use was not excessive.

In addition to commissions to the major officials discussed above, William Alnwick's registers also record a number of commissions to, and appointments of, other officials. The Norwich register, for example, records the appointment of seventeen penitentiaries.⁵ Their function was to absolve people from the

(ctd) an attempt to identify some of the ordination dates. As Alnwick was usually in Lincoln at Easter (see above, pp 74-5, 91) it seems likely that he presided at ordination ceremonies in the cathedral at this time.

1. Smith, 'Suffragan Bishops', p 20.
2. Linc. Reg., f 183.
3. *Ibid.*, ff 31, 76.
4. *Ibid.*, f 42v.
5. Norw. Reg., ff 101v-103v.

canonical censure of church courts; to supplement the confessional role of parish priests; to relieve the bishop of the burden of hearing at least some of his reserved cases; and to hear the confessions of rectors, lesser clergy, and the religious. Similarly, during his Lincoln episcopate, twelve men were granted licences to hear confessions and absolve penitents of sins usually reserved to the bishop.¹

One of the men who received such a licence was Thomas Twyer, rector of Glatton. He was also licensed to preach.² Bishop Alnwick's high opinion of his abilities is indicated not only by his appointment of Twyer as one of his executors, but also by the fact that he was one of the men regularly chosen to preach during the bishop's visitations of religious houses. His other favourite preachers were Thomas Duffeld³ and John Beverley, a canon of Lincoln cathedral.⁴ These three theologians illustrate the point that the pool of talent on which Bishop Alnwick was able to call contained not only able administrators but also men who would be of assistance for the more pastoral facets of the episcopal role.

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1. See below, pp 144-7. Lyndwood, *Provinciale*, pp 326-35, records the duties of these penitentiaries. See also *Eng. Clergy*, pp 55-6.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 31, 32v. See also *BRVO*, vol. III, p 1920
 3. See *BRVC*, p 196.
 4. See *ibid.* p 60, and also (for all three) *Visitations II*, pp 418-9.

3. The Bishop as Patron

The line between seeking a man's assistance and granting him patronage is a thin one. The appointment of an official might be seen as the first and most important sign of the bishop's patronage, or indeed the granting of high office might set the final seal on the career of a carefully nurtured protégé. Most of the offices filled had no formal salary attached to them. Nevertheless, an official would expect to share in the fees collected for business transacted. Such profits, however, are, because of the lack of documentation, probably impossible to calculate. Otherwise, the main source of income for such officials was the benefices they collected during their careers. Similarly, the bishop's most visible source of patronage was his ability to confer benefices.

As bishop of two large and valuable dioceses, William Alnwick had an abundant store of patronage to dispense in the form of benefices.¹ A number of these, including churches attached to episcopal manors, he held in his collation *pleno iure*. In addition to rectories and vicarages, he could collate a number of valuable canonries. Most outstanding, of course, were the canonries of Lincoln cathedral. At Norwich, the cathedral chapter was monastic, and so Alnwick did not have this source of patronage there. To some extent, this lack was compensated for by the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields in Norwich, the dignities of which were in his gift. These dignities, being sinecures, were particularly useful for the support of busy officials, lacking either the time or the inclination to serve benefices with cure.

In addition to those benefices which were in his collation by right, a bishop could acquire the right of patronage in a number of

1. M. Bowker, *The Secular Clergy in the Diocese of Lincoln 1495 - 1520* (1968), p 67, has calculated that the bishops of Lincoln had about fifty livings in their gift. She considers this a comparatively small number, and the comparison of figures for his Lincoln and Norwich episcopates (see Table 1) bears this out; but it was still fairly substantial.

other ways. When a rectory was appropriated to a religious house it was often with the proviso that although presentation to the created vicarage lay with the convent, nomination of the candidate was granted to the bishop. Moreover, the bishop might acquire the right of patronage through the failures of the rightful patrons. If a patron either failed to present to a benefice within six months of a vacancy occurring, or if he presented an unsuitable candidate, the benefice was said to 'devolve' to the bishop's collation.¹

William Alnwick thus had quite a considerable pool of resources with which to exercise his patronage.² Altogether, he collated or nominated something in the order of 300 benefices during his episcopal career. About fifty-five per cent of these were in the diocese of Norwich. Even if one discounts the ten per cent of these benefices which changed hands through exchanges, it is clear that he had great opportunities to influence the personnel of the diocesan clergy.

Who were the recipients of this patronage? As one might expect the names of known officials appear: John Wygenhale, his second vicar general, received a canonry in St Mary's in the Fields in 1433.³ William Sekyngton, his corrector general, received collation of the vicarage of Lowestoft in the same year.⁴ His receiver general, Thomas Ryngstede, was made dean of St Mary in the Fields in 1426, nominated to the vicarage of Mildenhall in 1432 (in an exchange), and received collation of the Lincoln cathedral prebend of Brampton in 1440.⁵ William Aiscough, who had assisted during Alnwick's heresy proceedings, received collation of Hevingham rectory in 1432.⁶ At Lincoln, several of the commissaries general obtained cathedral canonries.⁷ The vicar

1. *Provinciale*, p 215.

2. For the exact figures, see Table 1.

3. Norw. Reg., f 64.

4. *Ibid.*, f 59v.

5. Norw. Reg., ff. 91, 57; Linc. Reg., f 108v. In 1444-5, he relinquished Brampton for the prebend of Caistor.

6. *Ibid.*, f 53v.

7. See above, pp 67-8.

general, Robert Thornton, was promoted to the archdeaconry of Bedford in 1439.¹ Alnwick's suffragan bishop, William Gunwardby, bishop of Dunkeld, became vicar of Cople in 1441, and Thomas Balscot received a rectory in 1449.² In addition, a number of men who, like John Derby and Thomas Skayman, served Alnwick on *ad hoc* commissions also received prebends, Skayman gaining the dignity of treasurer of the cathedral in 1442.³

In addition to those who were granted benefices for past or future service, a few may have benefited from more intimate connections with the bishop. Although not a noted nepotist, William Alnwick was probably responding to family, or at least local, ties when he nominated a Master John Alnewyk to the vicarage of Surlingham in 1443.⁴ The William Alnewyk who had lived in his household while he was bishop of Norwich⁵ was very probably the same William Alnwick, bachelor of canon law, who became prebendary of Buckden in Lincoln cathedral.⁶ There is no record of his collation but, no doubt, Bishop Alnwick was his patron. It may have been his local Northumberland ties, as well as the power of the Percy family, which caused Alnwick to grant William Percy, son of the earl, a cathedral canonry in 1442.⁷

About a quarter of those who owed their benefices to Alnwick could explain their fortune by their service to, or connections with, the bishop. Some, like William Lyndwood and Richard Andrew, were primarily royal servants but Alnwick would certainly have known them through his own service to the crown, and may well have chosen them, as opposed to some other royal favourites, for his own patronage. Most of those patronised by Alnwick are, however, unknown entities. Nevertheless, perhaps something of Alnwick's policies can be perceived from an analysis of the status of those who gained benefices.

1. Linc. Reg., f 107v.

2. *Ibid.*, ff 183, 195.

3. *Ibid.*, f 110v.

4. Norw. Reg., f 59.

5. See above, p 111.

6. Linc. Reg., f 170v.

7. *Ibid.*, f 110v.

By far the majority of those receiving collation are known to have been priests. Very few men benefiting from Alnwick's patronage are known to have received benefices before they reached the priesthood. One sub-deacon and two graduates described as clerks received rectories, but as far as can be ascertained no man who was not a priest received a vicarage from the bishop. These rectors would be expected to employ priests to perform the sacramental tasks they were unqualified for. It would thus seem that, on the whole, Alnwick, while employing his resources for patronage to reward his officials, took some pains to ensure that the diocesan clergy were fully qualified sacramentally to serve their parishioners.

It would seem too that he showed some concern for their educational level. Nearly a quarter of his collations were to graduates.¹ It is not surprising that thirty of these graduates were collated to prebends of one kind or another, mainly in Lincoln cathedral. However, even among the parish clergy, he patronised a slightly higher proportion of graduates than was the general rule. These figures should probably not be made to bear too much analysis. Nevertheless, in the light of the perceived difficulties experienced by scholars seeking benefices,² it seems feasible that William Alnwick, a man whose rise to eminence was probably largely due to his university education, acted as patron to worthy scholars where possible. Further, the men he employed as officials were predominantly Cambridge graduates. Despite the fact that it was probably easier for a bright young man from the diocese of Norwich to attend the eastern university, it is at least possible that Alnwick was displaying a preference for graduates of his own university.

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1. In calculating these figures I have treated each collation as separate even if an individual was collated to more than one benefice. These figures may well be on the conservative side as the registrar may not always have noted a man's graduate status.
 2. See E.F. Jacobs, 'On the Promotion of English University Clerks in the Later Middle Ages', *JEH*, vol. I (1950), pp 172-86.

William Alnwick's patronage of learning did not end with the promotion of graduates. During his life he shared in the foundation of a grammar school and assisted in the foundation of King Henry's colleges at Eton and Cambridge.¹ It is also possible that he made his own contribution to Cambridge: '*hujus munificentia adjuti sunt Cantabrigenses in aedificando meridionali parte publicarum scholarum, et in missa Benefactorum memoratur*'.² Whatever truth lies behind this statement, it is certain that a number of young men had cause to be grateful to him. Not only did he pay for the schooling of those who lived in his household during his life time, but at his death he left £150 to pay thirty secular priests of the university towns to celebrate mass for his soul. Part of the residue of his estate was to support poor scholars of his two dioceses 'for their study in the universities of Oxford and Cambridge...or elsewhere as regards those who do not know their grammar', giving preference to those boys who dwelt in his household.³

John Breton may not have been alone in thinking that on entering William Alnwick's household he had found a '*singularissimus dominus*'.⁴ It should not, however, be imagined that in giving his patronage to his own favourites, Alnwick was in any way failing in his duties as a diocesan. Rather, the patronage of able clerks, so long as they were '*bone et honeste conversacionis*', was perhaps the greatest contribution that he could make to the smooth functioning of his dioceses.

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1. See below, pp 269-72, 311-3, 322.
 2. Godwin, *De Praesulibus*, p 298n. For his share in the foundation of a hall for Benedictine scholars, see below, pp 272-3.
 3. Cf. H. Jewell, 'English Bishops as Educational Benefactors in the Later Fifteenth Century', *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. R.B. Dobson (Gloucester, 1984), pp 146-67.
 4. See above, pp 82-3.

4. Conclusion

By the time William Alnwick became a bishop, his dioceses, like those in the rest of the country, had a highly developed system of administration. The older position of archdeacon may have become not much more than a source of revenue and power to a rising clerk, but the archdeacon's former administrative role had been inherited by an able body of men. These, headed by the official principal, had powers covering the whole of the bishop's jurisdiction both peculiar and ordinary. Such posts were usually filled by law graduates who were capable of administering a diocese with minimal supervision from the bishop. When the bishop was absent from the diocese (as Alnwick was, perforce, because of his governmental commitments) his place in the administration was filled by a vicar general, while his sacramental duties could be performed by a suffragan bishop.

The dioceses of Norwich and Lincoln reveal remarkably few differences in their methods of administration. The most notable difference was, perhaps, the fact that the bishop of Norwich's official seems to have enjoyed the power of correction whereas his Lincoln counterpart did not.¹ Otherwise, major dissimilarities would seem to have resulted from the disparity of the size of the two dioceses; for example, the existence of one commissary general in the diocese of Norwich as opposed to several at Lincoln. It is almost impossible to judge how efficient these two administrations were. Perhaps one can conclude, however, that the enormous difficulties inherent in the management of a diocese as large as Lincoln are exhibited in the confused arrangement of Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln register, which is in considerable contrast to the neat orderliness of his Norwich register.

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1. The actual as opposed to the theoretical power exercised by officials principal is perhaps a subject for further research.

Although Alnwick was often resident in his dioceses, and certainly exerted his authority when necessary,¹ he seems to have had a minimal personal impact on the structure of the diocesan administration. His only innovation was to hold ordinations in Norwich cathedral - perhaps a sign of friendly relations between bishop and convent. Although he probably had his own favourite protégés, he did not bring any new men into Norwich diocesan administration, choosing instead to utilise the proven abilities of men such as William Bernham and John Exeter. At Lincoln, he again continued the service of established assistants such as Gunwardby, the suffragan bishop. Nevertheless, there does seem to have been a small party of men who travelled with him to his new diocese, most notably Thomas Ryngstede² and John Breton. It is impossible to know what impact his personality had on those around him. Perhaps it was the continuity of able and reliable personnel, together with an insistence on the suitability of those presented to benefices, that was Alnwick's greatest contribution to the administration and character of his dioceses.

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1. As illustrated by his activity in Norwich during the heresy scare of 1428-31, and his tireless visitations of the Lincoln religious houses.
 2. It is interesting to note that, as early as February 1417, when he acted as Chichele's commissary for the probate of the earl of Oxford's will, the proctor for the countess of Oxford was Thomas Ryngstede, bachelor of canon law, whose instrument of proxy had been authenticated by one John Depyng, notary public (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, p 118). It would appear that the connections between Alnwick and his assistants originated earlier than is immediately apparent.

TABLE I (Part 1)

INSTITUTIONS IN THE DIOCESES OF NORWICH (1426-37) AND LINCOLN (1436-49)

CLERICAL STATUS OF THOSE INSTITUTED		RECTORIES				VICARAGES				CHANTRIES				FREE CHAPELS			
		Presented		Exchange		Presented		Exchange		Presented		Exchange		Presented		Exchange	
		Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.	Nor.	Linc.
Unknown	Patron	2	8	3	2	3	2				2						
	Bishop				1												
Unknown	Patron	7	17	5	2	2	7	1			1		1				
graduate	Bishop	1	2			1											
Clerk	Patron	12	17				1							1			
	Bishop																
Graduate	Patron	1	2				2										
clerks	Bishop		2														
First	Patron	15	1	1													
tonsure	Bishop																
Acolytes	Patron	4	1														
	Bishop																
Sub	Patron	2		1													
deacons	Bishop	1															
Deacons	Patron	6				1	4										
	Bishop																
Graduate	Patron	1				1											
deacons	Bishop																
'Dominus'	Patron	7		14		3		4									
(a)	Bishop		6	2	1	1	4	1			3						
Priests	Patron	435	503	100	143	169	378	19	43	5	46		11	2	5	2	
	Bishop	49	27	6	3	44	20	9		1	7		1				
Graduate	Patron	35	60	10	16	6	19	1	1						2		
priests	Bishop	7	5	1		5	2	1			1						
Bishops	Patron	1															
(b) (c)	Bishop						1										
Religious	Patron	7	4			8	8				1						
	Bishop	3	2			1											
Religious	Patron		1														
graduates	Bishop		1														
TOTAL		535	614	134	163	193	421	25	44	5	50	0	12	3	7	2	0
	Bishop	61	45	9	5	52	27	11	0	1	11	0	1	0	0	0	0
	Total	596	659	143	168	245	448	36	44	6	61	0	13	3	7	2	0

NB The figures for this table are all taken from Bishop Alnwick's episcopal registers.

'Presented' = those institutions resulting from straightforward presentations or elections

'Exchange' = those institutions resulting from exchanges

'Patron' = All other patrons except the bishop

(a) = Dominus probably usually denotes a priest. But there are instances of 'dominus A.B. clericus'.

(b) = The bishop presented by another patron was John, bishop of Annadown.

(c) = The bishop presented by Alnwick was William Gunwardby, bishop of Dunkeld.

TABLE 1 (Part 2)
INSTITUTIONS IN THE DIOCESES OF NORWICH (1426-37) AND LINCOLN (1436-49)

CLERICAL STATUS OF THOSE INSTITUTED		COLLEGES		RURAL DEANERIES		PREBENDS		ARCHDEACONRIES		TOTALS	
		Presented Nor. Linc.	Exchange Nor. Linc.	Presented Nor. Linc.	Exchange Nor. Linc.	Presented Nor. Linc.	Exchange Nor. Linc.	Presented Nor. Linc.	Exchange Nor. Linc.	Presented Nor. Linc.	Exchange Nor. Linc.
Unknown	Patron		1							5	13
	Bishop			1		1				1	1
Unknown	Patron	1		1						10	25
graduate	Bishop	1				9	2	1		3	12
Clerk	Patron		1							13	19
	Bishop			15		1				15	1
Graduate	Patron		1							1	5
clerks	Bishop									0	2
First	Patron									15	1
tonsure	Bishop									0	0
Acolytes	Patron									4	1
	Bishop									0	0
Sub	Patron									2	0
deacons	Bishop									1	0
Deacons	Patron									7	4
	Bishop									0	0
Graduate	Patron									2	0
deacons	Bishop									0	0
'Dominus'	Patron	2								12	0
(a)	Bishop									1	13
Priests	Patron	4	19	1						615	951
	Bishop	3	1	1	2		9			99	64
Graduate	Patron	2								43	81
priests	Bishop	3	3		1		18		1	1	16
Bishops	Patron									1	0
(b) (c)	Bishop									0	1
Religious	Patron		2							15	15
	Bishop									4	2
Religious	Patron									0	1
graduates	Bishop									0	1
TOTAL		9	24	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	745
	Bishop	7	4	1	0	19	0	0	0	0	140
	Total	16	28	2	1	19	0	0	0	0	885

NB Colleges refers to prebends or dignities in colleges and hospitals; Prebends refers to cathedral prebends.

IV. DISPENSATIONS AND DISCIPLINE: THE BISHOP AND HIS SUBJECTS

As bishop, successively, of two of the largest dioceses in England, William Alnwick had responsibility for the souls of many thousands of people, lay and clerical.¹ It has been stated that a late medieval bishop 'was on the whole insulated from his flock'.² Nevertheless, in overseeing the appointment of diocesan clergy the bishop clearly had an effect, indirect at least, on his subjects.³ Perhaps he touched their lives most directly, however, in his administration of the canon law.⁴ He had the power not only to discipline those who transgressed ecclesiastical law, but also to grant licences and dispensations enabling them to circumvent some obstacles raised against them by it. Whether his parishioners saw him as a true father in God or a distant administrator, it was to him that they had to turn if they wished for some spiritual favour, and it was before him or one of his assistants that they would be brought if they transgressed ecclesiastical law. How they regarded him depended, no doubt, on the circumstance in which they encountered him.

The picture that can be obtained of the relationship between Bishop Alnwick and his flocks is necessarily partial. There are few, if any, records reflecting the view of the bishop's subjects, and those that originate in the episcopal administration are so formal as to obscure the motives that lay behind the actions of the bishop and his assistants. They are, moreover, incomplete. For neither of Alnwick's episcopates is there a complete record of all dispensations granted or all subjects corrected. In attempting to

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1. Some idea of the numbers he was dealing with can perhaps be gained from the fact that in 1415 the diocese of Lincoln mustered over 3,000 secular clergy and over 1,500 religious (Heath, *Church and Realm*, p 284).
 2. Haines, 'William Gray', pp 445-6.
 3. No attempt has been made here at the kind of systematic analysis of parochial clergy contained in Bowker, *The Secular Clergy*. Nevertheless, some light may be shed on this subject by the discussion below. For the ranks of men presented to benefices, see Table I, pp 139-40 above.
 4. There is no attempt in this chapter to analyse the bishop's relationship with the religious houses of his dioceses. See below, chapter V.

analyse the records that do remain, one needs to be constantly aware of their incompleteness. When discussing the bishop's gracious power of dispensation, it is as well to remember not only that the record of dispensations and licences actually granted is incomplete but also that such records as do remain give no hint of what proportion of the petitions that came to the bishop were granted. The records of cases before the bishop's courts need to be treated with even more circumspection. One should beware of too readily concluding that allegations are always true. Similarly, it is dangerous to judge the episcopal courts by their records. Particularly important is the fact that the incompleteness of the record of a particular case does not necessarily mean that the case was not concluded, either in or out of court, to the satisfaction of some at least of the parties.¹ Bearing these strictures in mind, it is hoped that the examination in turn of Bishop Alnwick's exercise of his ability to grant dispensations and licences, and of his duty both to make peace between and to correct his subjects, will shed some light on the bishop's position in his diocese, and the machinery which supported him.

1. See especially, the editor's introduction to *Legal Records and the Historian*, ed. J.H. Baker (1978), pp 1-6.

1. Dispensations, Licences and Responses to the Petitions
of the Bishop's Subjects

In administering his diocese, a bishop had the power not only to dispense with canon law but also to grant licences and dispensations which he believed would be to the benefit of the souls of individual or group recipients.¹ In addition to the licences granted directly by William Alnwick, he was responsible for administering the dispensations granted by the pope.²

The Lincoln and Norwich registers, together with the Lincoln court book, record a total of about 200 dispensations granted by Alnwick. By far the majority of these (something in the order of eighty-five per cent) are recorded in the Lincoln records, thus supporting the contention³ that separate dispensations registers, subsequently lost, were kept at Norwich. These dispensations can roughly be subdivided into those awarded to the clergy and corporate bodies, those awarded to the laity, and those granted to communities or to the bishop's subjects in general.

Grants to individual clergymen seem, in the main, either to support them in their calling or to enable them to absent themselves from benefices. In order to proceed to holy orders a man had to be of legitimate birth and canonical age. A man not

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1. The main sources for the dispensations and licences granted by Bishop Alnwick are his two episcopal registers. While Linc. Reg. may be nearly complete in this respect, it is unlikely that the same can be said for Norw. Reg. It was, apparently, customary in Norwich for licences of non-residence and letters dimissory to be recorded in separate registers (Burnham, p 165), as illustrated by the survival of a register of letters dimissory for the episcopate of Bishop Ayerme (1325-36). Nothing similar survives for Alnwick's Norwich episcopate. The registers are supplemented by scattered references in Alnwick's Lincoln court book.
 2. CPL, vols VIII-X, *passim*. For papal dispensation, see J.A.F. Thomson, '"The Well of Grace": Englishmen and Rome in the Fifteenth Century', *The Church, Politics and Patronage in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. R.B. Dobson (Gloucester, 1984), pp 99-114.
 3. See above. See Tables II and III for an analysis of the figures.

meeting these criteria needed a papal dispensation before ordination was allowed.¹ Irene Churchill implies that such dispensations were frequently given,² but only one example has been found for Alnwick's episcopates. On 11 April 1446, in the bishop's manor at Nettleham, John Brig alias Randson of Mumby, the son of a priest, exhibited to Bishop Alnwick letters apostolic dispensing him of his irregular birth. Although it is not stated, it seems likely that Brig wished to proceed to orders. The record is incomplete, but clearly this was not just a formal business.³ Alnwick's surveillance over those proceeding to orders is further illustrated by the case of John Denton. In 1437, he was freed from the bishop's displeasure, incurred because, although born of a priest, he had entered minor orders. The mercy he sought was granted because he claimed not to have known the law.⁴

It is not known whether Alnwick agreed with Reginald Pecock that bishops were not bound to preach, or with his unattractive, but orthodox, contemporary Thomas Gascoigne that they were. Indeed, there does not remain any record of a formal sermon preached by him.⁵ However much he may have liked to, even a rigidly orthodox bishop, which Alnwick surely was, could not personally preach and minister to all his people. The normal preachers and confessors of the laity were the parish clergy. The inherent dangers of unauthorised preaching were recognised by the statute '*de Haeretico Comburendo*', of 1401, which stated that all preachers must be licensed by the diocesan. This was complemented by the papal constitution '*Super Cathedram*', which enabled bishops to authorise friars to preach and hear confessions within their dioceses.⁶ Thus Bishop Alnwick received letters from the priors provincial of the Fransiscan and Augustinian orders offering a

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1. *Provinciale*, pp 26-32.
 2. *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, p 106. She adds that these grants were normally confirmed 'after due enquiry in local chapters'.
 3. Court book, p 42.
 4. *Linc. Reg.*, f 32v. Cf. Thomson, 'Well of Grace', p 105.
 5. Informal admonishment delivered at the time of the visitation of his cathedral chapter and religious houses (NRO: Vj 2 and *Visitations II*, *passim*) was perhaps something different.
 6. Churchill, *Canterbury Admin.*, p 126.

total of five friars as confessors and preachers in the Lincoln diocese in accordance with '*Super Cathedram*'.¹ Alnwick's response was not recorded but some concern for the spiritual well being of his people may be deduced from his licensing of twelve other men to preach and/or hear confessions within the diocese. These licences varied in extent from one man who was licensed to preach in a single parish church for two years,² to the four men who were allowed to preach anywhere in the diocese.³

Licences to hear confessions were usually given in very general terms, but in one instance the cases reserved to the bishop were cited in full. John Cotehill, vicar of St Mary's Oxford was licensed to absolve his parishioners of all sins except the defloration of virgins and nuns, perjury and violence.⁴ The duration of such licences varied from between one year to the bishop's pleasure.

In granting these licenses, Alnwick was entrusting these men with some share of his spiritual jurisdiction. These twelve Lincoln licences bear comparison with the appointment of penitentiaries in the diocese of Norwich.⁵ Seventeen 'penitentiaries' were appointed in two distinct ways. To nine, the bishop, or his vicar general, conceded the authority ('*concedimus facultatem*') to hear the secret confessions of all his parishioners and to absolve them of all their sins, except in cases where they had incurred excommunication from the bishop or his official, and in cases involving perjury, corruption of nuns, violence against the clergy and the liberties of the church, and the invasion of the bishop's parks. Eight were *commissioned* to act as confessors to nuns.⁶

1. Linc. Reg., ff 40, 62v-3.

2. Peter Fader, priest, in Boston Church (*ibid.*, f 38).

3. Roger Husewife, priest (*ibid.*, f 30v); William Swynesherd, bachelor of theology (f 32v); John Maunshull, bachelor, and Thomas Wyche, scholar of theology (*ibid.*, f 62v). Other licences are recorded in *ibid.*, ff 31, 32v, 43, 62, 72v.

4. *Ibid.*, f 62v.

5. Norw. Reg. ff 101v-103v (cf. Burnham, pp 168-9).

6. See also below, pp 276-7.

While the Norwich men were not granted authority to preach, it seems that, even if the confessors to the Norwich convents are excepted, Alnwick's Lincoln 'licences' and Norwich 'appointments' are comparable. What kind of men were these? The seventeen Norwich penitentiaries included eight (Benedictine) monks of the Norwich cathedral priory, five of whom were priors of its cells. John Derham, prior of St Margaret's Lynn, was a graduate, and he may not have been the only one.¹ All these men were granted the general faculty. The ninth was John Thirlowe, an Austin friar. It is interesting to note that his faculty² was the only one that was limited as to time (to one year). This may signify that Alnwick was concerned to keep the power of absolution in the hands of the men he knew well, as presumably was the case with monks of his cathedral priory. The nuns' confessors present a less uniform spectacle. There were three friars, two Augustinian and one Fransiscan, all doctors in theology; two priests (one a graduate); two vicars (one a bachelor of theology); and one rector. Four of the seventeen men were occasional assistants at Alnwick's heresy trials.³

The men licensed in the Lincoln diocese were of a similarly high calibre.⁴ Although Alnwick is not recorded as having licenced any regulars in the Lincoln diocese, it seems likely that he would have acceded to the priors provincials' requests to license their brothers. Assuming he did, this would have led to the licensing of two Austin friars, one a bachelor of theology, and three Fransiscans, all 'learned in theology'. The seculars licensed included three bachelors of theology, one scholar, one doctor and four other graduates.⁵ It would thus seem that Alnwick was making

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1. *BRUO*, vol. I, p 572. The others do not appear in *BRUO* or *BRUC*.
 2. *Norw. Reg.*, f 103.
 3. John Derham, John Elys, John Ingham vicar of Redenhall and bachelor of theology, and the Augustinian Clement Felmyngham (*Trials*, pp 84; 41, 114, 120, 125, 131, 133; 103-5; 93).
 4. Eight were licensed to preach, two to hear confessions and two to do both.
 5. One of the theologians was Thomas Twyer, rector of Glatton, who was to preach at several of Alnwick's monastic visitations and to be appointed one of Alnwick's executors (see above, p 131; *Visitations II*, p xxx).

some effort to ensure that his people received spiritual direction from the more highly educated members of the clergy. Common form though it may be, there is no need to doubt the preamble to his appointments of the Norwich penitentiaries, that he was granting the faculties because he was 'vigilant of the health of the souls of his subjects'.

Just as the fear of spreading heresy limited those who were permitted to preach, so it gave bishops control over the licensing of school teachers.² Three licences to teach grammar schools in the Norwich diocese are known.³ It has been stated that, in the later middle ages, little notice was taken by the church authorities of the details of school life.⁴ Although nothing is known of how Alnwick decided that these men were suitable to be admitted, nevertheless a conscientious diocesan could have some effect, at least, on the lives of his people in his oversight of such appointments.

The final 'enabling' licence revealed by the records of Alnwick's episcopates is that allowing a priest to celebrate an 'annual'.⁵ This year-long celebration of masses for the dead enabled a priest to supplement a meagre income.⁶ One of the four such licences recorded in Alnwick's Lincoln register illustrates this. In 1442, the rector of Wyham was licensed to celebrate an *annual* for the dead for three years because of the poverty of the benefice.⁷ In 1439, the rector of Throcking was licensed to

1. E.g. Norw. Reg., f 101v.

2. Heath, *Church and Realm*, p 254.

3. Norw. Reg., ff 59, 75v, 65. Thomas Spenser, clerk, was licensed to teach grammar in Fincham. William Kyng, priest, and Jacob Wale, clerk, were given custody of the grammar schools of Harleston and Thetford.

4. N. Orme, 'Schoolmasters, 1307-1509', pp 218-41 in *Profession Vocation and Culture*, ed. Clough, p 227.

5. See *Provinciale*, p 279.

6. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 22.

7. Linc. Reg., f 42v.

'receive' an *annual* for two years, wherever he might be in the diocese.¹ This would seem to indicate that a rector might profit from special services without necessarily presiding over them. This kind of service might offer comfort to bereaved parishioners but, if exploited merely for income by an absentee incumbent, could possibly become the cause of disquiet in the parish.

The mobility of clergy even beyond their dioceses of origin is illustrated by the many men who were ordained by foreign bishops on the authority of letters dimissory granted by their own diocesan.² This does not necessarily indicate extensive non-residence. As William Alnwick's Norwich register reveals,³ it was a small minority of candidates for holy orders who were already beneficed. Alnwick's Lincoln register records the issue of letters dimissory to sixty-four clerks. Depending on the clerk's status at the time of the grant, the common form was for the bishop to issue the letters dimissory to the clerk allowing him promotion to all major and minor or (more often) all holy orders from any catholic bishop. There was no instance of a clerk receiving licence to be promoted to any limited level of the orders (e.g. to sub-deacon and no further), but there was plenty of variation in the level at which the clerks received the letters dimissory. In all, four deacons, six sub-deacons, thirty-one acolytes, ten men having first tonsure, seven 'clerks' and six men whose status was not recorded were granted letters dimissory within thirteen years.⁴ It would thus seem that most men reached the level of acolyte before leaving their diocese of origin.

Only one man, 'Fraunceys', rector of Hemingford, an acolyte, was already beneficed.⁵ It would seem, therefore, that the Lincoln letters dimissory confirm the impression given by the institution

1. Linc. Reg., f 44v. See also *ibid.*, ff 49v, 76v.

2. Cf. *Provinciale*, p 32.

3. Norw. Reg., ff 118-146v, *passim*. See also J.F. Williams, 'Ordination in the Norwich Diocese'.

4. Linc. Reg., ff 28-31v, 34v-37v, 40, 43, 46v, 47v, 49v, 51v, 52, 55-57, 59, 61v, 62, 70v-72v, 74, 75v-77.

5. *Ibid.*, f 57.

records and the Norwich ordination lists that only a very small proportion of the beneficed clergy were not priests. Thus, although there is no direct evidence that Alnwick granted these letters after inquiry into the mens' behaviour,¹ it seems that grants were not haphazard. This impression is strengthened by a small number of instances of the bishop absolving those who had transgressed the rules. For example, in 1447, he ratified the holy orders that William Brees, priest, had received from an alien bishop without licence.²

The only direct reference to letters dimissory in Alnwick's Norwich register is the record of the absolution of John Benet of Bury St Edmunds, who had been ordained sub-deacon and deacon by the bishop of Emlý in Bury St Edmunds, without licence.³ Although, the registers of Alnwick's Norwich letters dimissory have been lost, the fact that they were granted is confirmed by the ordination lists of Alnwick's episcopal colleagues.⁴

While letters dimissory are not valid evidence for the non-residence of beneficed clergy, there are a number of dispensations which are.⁵ A man responsible for cure of souls could not be absent from his benefice without his bishop's permission.⁶ Only four such licences are recorded in Alnwick's Norwich register.⁷ The Lincoln records reveal the granting of thirty-five licences of non-residence.⁸ The constitutions of Otto and Ottobon required

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1. Cf. *Canterbury Admin.*, p 104.
 2. *Linc. Reg.*, f 71.
 3. *Norw. Reg.*, f 42. This seems to have been part of Alnwick's conflict with the exempt jurisdiction of the abbot of Bury St Edmunds. See below, p *.
 4. *The Register of Thomas Langley*, vol. III, records several clerks ordained with letters dimissory from the Norwich diocese, e.g. in 1428, Clement Blake, acolyte, by letters dimissory of William bishop of Norwich (p 96).
 5. For the absenteeism of the beneficed clergy, see Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 49-69.
 6. See *Canterbury Admin.*, pp 116-7; Burnham, pp 164-5; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 103-4; Bowker, *Secular Clergy*, pp 73, 85-6, 97.
 7. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 97v, 107, 111.
 8. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 28-29, 36-40v, 42v, 43, 47v, 49v, 53v, 55v, 57, 61v, 66v, 74, 75v; Court book, pp 13, 64.

vicars to make an oath of perpetual residence¹ and in most cases it would seem that this was observed, by the authorities at least. There are, however, three recorded cases of Alnwick permitting a vicar's absence.² One can only guess at the reasons that induced Alnwick to tolerate the absence of Robert Dolyth, vicar of Aldenham, from his cure for one year. However, the other two cases seem to be exceptional: the vicar of Ulceby wished to fulfill a vow to visit Rome, made before receiving his benefice; and Thomas Galle, vicar of Merston Lawrence did not dare stay in his vicarage because of bodily fear of his enemies.

Among the licences granted to rectors was one for the rector of 'Houton', who was granted leave to visit Rome with the vicar of Ulceby.³ Henry Blyburgh, rector of Owmbly, was too old and sickly to serve his cure. The rectories of Holcot and Walker were uninhabitable. Two rectors dared not reside because of 'unjust indictments and vexations' contrived against them.⁴ There is no evidence of any attempts by Alnwick to substantiate these claims, but the fact that he had to dispense these incumbents seems to indicate that he was unable to protect them.

Several rectors were serving in the households of great men, such as the archbishop of York, Richard Andrew, the king's secretary, and the earl of Northumberland. Thomas Gascoigne railed against such '*licencias non residendi in suis beneficiis omnibus qui manent in curiis regum, episcoporum, et dominorum aliorum*'.⁵ He might not have objected so much to the fifteen rectors whose

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1. *Canterbury Admin.*, pp 116-7.
 2. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 39 (Thomas Galle); Court book, pp 13 (Robert Dolyth), 64 (vicar of Ulceby).
 3. Court book, p 64. Holton cum Beckering, Lincolnshire? It was in the Wraggloe deanery. Where it is not possible to identify the modern names of places mentioned in the text, the name is quoted as it appears, in single quotation marks.
 4. The perceived frequency of such indictments is illustrated by the regularity with which clerks unjustly indicted were excused payment of clerical subsidies (see A. McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation in Fifteenth-century England: the Clergy as Agents of the Crown', pp 168-92 in *Church, Politics and Patronage*, ed. Dobson, p 177).
 5. *Loci e Libro*, p 153.

licences enabled them to further their education. Their educational level ranged widely: for example, John Hyrste, rector of 'Market Buton', was dispensed to study grammar for two years on condition that he prove to the bishop at the end of that period that his learning had improved; and Robert att Hall, rector of Mixbury, bachelor of canon law, and principal of 'Bosehall', was granted leave to lecture in Oxford University for one year.¹ Thirteen were simply dispensed to study at a university, the two Norwich rectors specifically at Cambridge.

These dispensations to study were made in accordance with the constitution '*Cum ex eo*', which enabled bishops to dispense incumbents from residence for up to seven years. It also enabled them to stay in orders no higher than the sub-diaconate during that period.² Consequently, these licences of non-residence do militate against the argument that it was unusual for the beneficed not to be priests.³ In all, five rectors, including the bishop's favourite, John Breton, rector of Therfield, who was a deacon, were permitted to remain at their existing level.⁴

In contrast to this apparent leniency, none of the scholars are recorded as being dispensed for the maximum period of seven years. For three men, the limits of their absence were not specified.⁵ Master Thomas Grange, was permitted to attend Archbishop Kemp for as long as his service lasted.⁶ Two men were permitted to be absent for up to six years to study.⁷ Six each were granted dispensations for two and three years. However, twenty, by far the majority, were only given licence to be absent for one year. One man, John Whitby, rector of Freston, was granted specifically from

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1. Emden does not seem to have noticed this entry on him (*BRVO*, vol. I, p 71) .
 2. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 103-4; Burnham, p 165.
 3. See above, pp 148-9.
 4. Norw. Reg., ff 97v, 107; Linc. Reg., ff 36, 40, 66v.
 5. Not surprisingly, two of these were the men embarking on pilgrimage to Rome. The other was John Sturws, rector of Holcot, much of whose town and rectory had been reduced to ashes by fire (Court book, p 64; Linc. Reg., f 28).
 6. Linc. Reg., f 75v.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 38, 43.

December 1428 until Michaelmas 1429.¹ The impression that Alnwick preserved a fairly tight rein on such dispensations is confirmed by the conditions attached to them. In addition to many general instructions that the dispensed reside '*in honestis locis*', five dispensations specified that divine service should be provided for;² three that those caring for the fruits of the church should render account for them to the bishop or his ministers;³ and six that sums of money ranging from 3s 4d to 13s 4d should be distributed among the poor of the parish.⁴ Two of the incumbents were to reside in their parishes during Lent,⁵ and one dispensation was dependent on the bishop receiving good reports of his behaviour from Cambridge university.⁶

It has been said that non-residence was largely due to pluralism.⁷ On purely internal evidence this would not seem to have been the case during Alnwick's episcopates. Of all the men dispensed, not one is recorded as a pluralist, although Robert att Hall was dispensed during his absence to serve cure of souls in the chapel of St Thomas of Canterbury by Osney for a salary which was to be used for the repair of his rectory.⁸ He later received a papal dispensation to hold an incompatible benefice.⁹ Alnwick's Lincoln register records two men with papal dispensations to hold incompatible benefices.¹⁰ When Master Richard Chestre, rector of South Willingham in the Lincoln diocese,¹¹ exhibited a confirmation by Eugenius IV of Martin V's dispensation allowing him to hold two incompatible benefices, John Depyng insisted on seeing the earlier

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1. Norw. Reg., f 97v.
 2. This does not mean, of course, that divine service was not going to be provided in the other benefices.
 3. Norw. Reg., ff 111, 111v; Linc. Reg., f 61v.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 36, 36v (two), 37 (three).
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 37, 37v.
 6. Norw. Reg., f 107.
 7. Bowker, *Secular Clergy*, p 73, 'About 25 per cent of all parishes in the diocese had non-resident priests in 1514-21 and most non-residents were pluralists'. Cf. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 50.
 8. Linc. Reg., f 74.
 9. *BRVO*, vol. I, p 71.
 10. Cf. Thomson, 'Well of Grace', p 102.
 11. Linc. Reg., f 36v (1440).

dispensation before allowing him to pass. Thomas Ryngrstede, one of Alnwick's favourites, had no such problems. When he showed the bishop a bull of dispensation in 1442, it was promptly confirmed.¹ It does not appear from, these three instances, that Alnwick was allowing large scale pluralism in his dioceses.²

A frequent accompaniment to a licence for non-residence was that for farming out the benefice.³ A large proportion of all those licensed in both dioceses were granted this additional dispensation. Moreover, Alnwick's Lincoln register records three rectors and a vicar who were granted only this licence. No condition was attached to the dispensation for three years that was awarded in 1442 to William Baset, perpetual vicar of Ashwell.⁴ Probably, as he was a vicar, there was no need to stipulate that he should reside. Certainly that condition was attached to all the other dispensations.⁵ The bishop's register may not give the full number of such licences. Some indication of their true extent may perhaps be gained from the accounts of the commissary general of the archdeaconry of Leicester, which record thirteen churches let to farm in 1441-2 and five in 1442-3.⁶ The reason behind such practice may have been simple idleness, or the need to find more time for their other duties. Perhaps some of them were in failing health and hoped, by removing some of the burdens of their office, to avoid having to resign.

The records of Alnwick's episcopates reveal the bishop dealing with a number of people incapable of continuing to serve their benefices. To Walter Butteler, the vicar of Langton, who was

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1. *Ibid.* f 40. The nature of this bull is not described in the register. Earlier that same year, Eugenius had granted Alnwick a faculty to allow Ryngrstede to farm the fruits of his Lincoln prebend and the vicarage of Mildenhall in the Norwich diocese and not be bound to reside (CPL, vol. IX, p 259).
 2. For the disciplinary side of non-residence and pluralism, see below, pp 176-7.
 3. Cf. *Provinciale*, pp 151-4.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 76v.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 35, 40, 77.
 6. LAO: BP Accounts 5, mm 4, 6. Only one church, Stonesby, was listed in both accounts.

described as '*mente alienati*', Alnwick assigned a coadjutor, Thomas Wade, who swore to account to the bishop and to support the vicar from the fruits of the church.¹ Alnwick's registers record the assignment of four pensions to retired incumbents. In the Norwich diocese, Robert Hethe, rector of 'Brecham', had become too old to continue. If the record is to be believed, his replacement, Thomas Feltham, on his own initiative, requested that the bishop set a pension to be paid out of the church's fruits to his predecessor.² Feltham's attitude was in marked contrast to that of Thomas Ware, rector of Abbots Ripton, who in 1446 (unsuccessfully) opposed Alnwick's award of a pension to his predecessor.³ These pensions would seem to be justified. So long as a benefice's resources were not drained too greatly,⁴ they reflected well on the nature of the jurisdiction exercised by Bishop Alnwick.

Bishop Alnwick was spiritual father not only to the clergy but also to the laity of his dioceses, and they too benefited from his 'well of grace'.⁵ A lay man wishing to enter holy orders had to be free, a rule which was reflected in the recording and confirmation of a number of manumissions in Alnwick's Norwich ordination lists.⁶ One manumission involved the bishop more directly, and seems to have arisen from different motives. In 1445, Bishop Alnwick freed '*nativos nostros*' Robert Tolons of Boughton, and his children.⁷ The mood of the times and even of the bishop may be indicated by Alnwick's stated reason for this act: the reduction of Boughton's value '*iam mundo senescente*'.

In granting and confirming manumissions Alnwick was dealing with the most lowly of his subjects. The social status of all those lay subjects receiving dispensations from him is not clear,

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1. Linc. Reg., f 38. Wade's accounts were later approved by the bishop's commissary, John Derby. There are no dates attached.
 2. Norw. Reg., ff 114-15.
 3. Court book, p 9.
 4. A possibility illustrated by Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 146-7.
 5. See Table III.
 6. Norw. Reg., ff 120v, 135, 141, 144.
 7. Linc. Reg., f 57v.

but a number of recipients were from the highest levels of society. In December 1436, one of William Alnwick's first acts as bishop of Lincoln was to grant Sir John Cornwall, Lord Fanhope, a dispensation from Lenten dietary regulations. During Lent there was a complete canonical ban on eating not only meat but also *lacticinia*, or dairy products. It apparently became easier to gain dispensations from this obligation in the fifteenth century,¹ but this is the only recorded instance for the entire quarter of Alnwick's episcopates. This dispensation was granted for one year, provided Cornwall gave extra bread and fish to the poor.²

Most licences granted to the high born laity were for private oratories, chapels or priests. Two dispensations of this kind were recorded in Alnwick's Norwich register and twenty-four in his Lincoln register.³ Among others receiving such grants were the earl and countess of Suffolk; Lady Elizabeth Etton of Foss; two men described as '*domicellus*'; several knights and esquires and one widow. The majority of these dispensations allowed the recipients to hear mass and other divine services in their homes. A few had conditions placed on their dispensations: for example, for as long as they had a suitable priest;⁴ as long as it did not prejudice the parish church or priest or anyone else;⁵ and for the time the recipient's infirmities prevented him from attending his parish church.⁶ William earl of Suffolk and William Tailboys, the two best known recipients, had more unusual grants. Suffolk and his wife were allowed to conserve the holy sacrament within their houses in the diocese, so long as it was not touched by profane hands. Tailboys was granted the right to choose his confessor.⁷ Such dispensations reveal the increasing tendency towards privacy

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1. J. Bossy, *Christianity in the West, 1400-1700* (Oxford, 1985), p 51.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 28.
 3. Norw. Reg., f 97v; Linc. Reg., ff 29, 31, 32v, 35, 37, 37v, 39v, 41, 49v (two to John Wynde of 'Wylkesby' and his wife - named Alice and Lucy in the separate entries), 53v, 55v, 59, 62, 72v, 74, 76v.
 4. Norw. Reg., f 97v.
 5. *Ibid.*, f 97v; Linc. Reg., ff 37v, 39v.
 6. Linc. Reg., f 41.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 39v, 55v.

of worship displayed by the gentle classes of the later middle ages.¹

Bishop Alnwick could grant these dispensations of his own jurisdiction. Papal authority was needed to dispense with impediments to marriage, which might arise through consanguinity, relation by marriage or spiritual affinity.² While dispensations for private oratories may have aided lay piety, it was essential that marriages were known to be legally valid, not only for the health of a couple's souls but also for their children, who would otherwise be deemed illegitimate and thus unable to inherit from their parents. Between them, Alnwick's two registers and the *Calendars of Papal Letters* record nine cases of dispensations for impediments to marriage during his episcopates. Alnwick's care is perhaps illustrated by his institution of an inquisition into the case of Robert Arkettell and Margaret at Hill, who had married despite being related within four degrees, before confirming a papal dispensation in 1442.³ Unlike this couple, John Hastings and Anne Morley of the Norwich diocese and Mary Apilby and Robert Lumley of the Lincoln diocese, who were both related within the third degree of affinity, clearly thought ahead. They obtained their papal dispensations *before* they were married.⁴

In five cases, couples claimed to have married in ignorance of spiritual affinity.⁵ Among these were Robert Attenabbe of West

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1. Discussed by R.G.K.A. Meetes in 'The Household as a Religious Community', *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond (Gloucester, 1987), pp 123-39. See also C. Richmond, 'Religion and the Fifteenth-century English Gentleman', pp 193-208, in *Church, Politics and Patronage*, ed. Dobson. 'It is this privatisation of religion for the gentry...which seems to me the most important development in late medieval English history. It leads directly to the English Reformation' (p 198).
 2. Thomson, 'Well of Grace', p 104.
 3. Linc. Reg., f 39. For a similar example (Robert Wascelyn and Elizabeth Boys, who had already contracted and consummated their marriage), see *CPL*, vol. IX, p 284.
 4. *CPL*, vol. VIII, p 502; vol. IX, p 563.
 5. *Ibid.*, vol. VIII, pp 165-6, 172, 661; vol IX, p 288; Vol x, p 25.

Acre and Catherine Narburgh,¹ who had married in ignorance of the impediment created by the fact that Robert's first wife had been godmother to a child born to Catherine by her first husband. The remaining cases were similar. Alnwick's role was not merely to pass on the pope's dispensation. In each case he was first required to confirm that the situation was as stated.²

The cases discussed above are of couples whose marriages were allowed despite impediments. In a number of cases, marriages were permitted to take place despite irregularities in the method of contract. Two couples received a dispensation to be married by a suitable priest after only one reading of the banns.³ In a third case, the pope ordered Bishop Alnwick to act in regularising a marriage which may well have caused great scandal in the Norwich diocese.⁴ John Kypping and Margery Lomnowre had promised to marry while Margery's husband was still alive. Bishop Alnwick's task was to absolve them of adultery, enjoin a salutary penance and, after a temporary separation, dispense them to remain in the marriage. Unfortunately, there is no record of what penance he allocated.

Not all widows were eager to re-marry. It may have been unusual to live a celibate life while still married, as Margery Kempe and her (unwilling) husband did. It was not, however, unusual for a widow to take vows of chastity that did not necessarily involve taking the veil.⁵ On 19 April 1444, Bishop Alnwick, in the course of a solemn mass, received the profession of Joan Boleyn, widow of his diocese, who vowed to live a chaste life after the eremitical rule of St Paul.⁶ This example from the Lincoln diocese is matched by the hermits and anchorites who are

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1. Norw. Reg., f 101.
 2. In the case of Robert Attenabbe and Catherine Narburgh he was instructed by the pope to check that she had not been forced into marriage by rape.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 59, 74.
 4. CPL, vol. VIII, p 80.
 5. D.M. Owen, *Church and Society in Medieval Lincolnshire* (Lincoln, 1971), p 123.
 6. Linc. Reg., f 54. See V.G. Davis, 'The Rule of St Paul, The First Hermit, in Late Medieval England', *Studies in Church History* 22, ed. W.J. Sheils (1985), pp 203-14.

known to have inhabited the Norwich diocese during Alnwick's episcopate.¹ There is no evidence that Alnwick ever encountered the most famous anchoress of his time, Julian of Norwich. He was, however, aware of the desire felt by a number of his subjects to live this isolated life, for the bishop's licence was needed to create a hermitage or become a hermit. In January 1434, the mayor and ten parishioners of Sudbury wrote to Alnwick on behalf of Richard Appleby of the same town, begging the bishop to re-consider his decision to turn down Appleby's request to become a hermit. They were prepared to build a hermitage in the churchyard for him to share for life with a John Lenyngton, already a hermit, with whom Appleby was currently living.² There is no record of Alnwick's response to this letter, but perhaps its entry in the register is evidence that he relented.

This letter illustrates the fact that, although private piety appears to have been on the increase, individuals still lived and worked very much within local communities. This is reflected in a number of Bishop Alnwick's measures. The most frequent act benefiting whole communities was the union of benefices. Alnwick's episcopal registers record the creation of six united churches in the Norwich diocese between 1426 and 1437, and four in the Lincoln diocese between 1436 and 1449.³ The request to unite the benefices usually came from the patrons, who were occasionally the same for both churches,⁴ and was generally supported by the incumbent (if there was one) and parishioners. The usual reason given for a union was the poverty of one or both benefices, the fruits of the churches often not being enough to attract and

1. See Tanner, *The Church in Late Medieval Norwich*, pp 58-64.

2. Norw. Reg., f 112. Discussed by Burnham, pp 169-70.

3. Norw. Reg., ff 41v, 46-47v, 65, 100v-101, 109v-111, 113v-114; Linc. Reg., ff 20-21v, 23, 53, 70. Burnham, who discusses unions of churches, pp 78-95, is thus wrong to suggest (p 78) 'that, though according to Lyndwood, the right to unite benefices fell within the sphere of ordinary jurisdiction, the bishops of Norwich alone exercised this power'.

4. E.g. the prior and convent of Butley who were patrons of both Langhale and Kirkstede churches, united in 1431 (Norw. Reg., f 47).

maintain a priest. The request to reunite the portions of the church of St Helen's Theddlethorpe described vividly how '*mundo ad senium declinante*', floods and diseases had led to a decrease in population and fruits of the churches so that they were only able to support one rector and rectory.¹ The truth of such statements is attested by the number of churches which were lying empty at the time of union.²

Before permitting a union, the bishop commissioned an inquiry into the truth behind the request; the convenience of the churches for union; and whether the patrons were in agreement. The benefices were then united by the bishop or his vicar general under certain conditions. If the churches were separate, the incumbent was to perform at least some services in each church and the parishioners were not to be responsible for the costs of the upkeep of each other's churches.³

Such united churches might cause problems for their incumbents. In 1448, Master John Leek, one of Alnwick's leading commissaries and rector of Hoghton and Wytton, requested, with the support of his parishioners in both places, that he be allowed to alternate the services between the churches, claiming that it was difficult for him and his assistant chaplains to identify who went to which services. Alnwick commissioned his assistants John Derby and John Butterwick to look into the situation and, on the agreement of all parties, to acquiesce with Leek's request.⁴

While in some places reductions in population and wealth led to the union of rectories, in others increases in population, changes of affection and the convenience of parishioners led to requests for the enhancement of the status of subsidiary chapels. Two cases

1. Linc. Reg., f 53.

2. E.g. Dickleburgh, St Andrews Snetterton (Norw. Reg., ff 100v-101, 113v-114); Fulletby, Theddlethorp, Buslingthorpe and Frisby (Linc. Reg., ff 23, 53, 70). For poverty as a cause of union, see Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 164-5.

3. Norw. Reg., ff 46v, 109v-111.

4. Linc. Reg., f 77v.

are recorded of parishioners in the Lincoln diocese requesting to be allowed to bury their dead in a local chapel rather than carry them to distant parish churches.' In one case, the inhabitants of Glapthorn complained that their parish church of Cotterstock was so distant that 'on account of floods, especially in winter, it is burdensome for them to carry their dead thither for burial'.² The results of both petitions are unknown.

Appeals for local burial were perhaps based on convenience. The case of the chapel of St Nicholas at Bishop's Lynn seems to have been one of civic pride. In the 1420's, an attempt was made to have this chapel, dependent on the parish church whose rector was the Benedictine prior of Lynn, licensed for baptism and the purification of women. According to Margery Kempe, the mayor and aldermen of Lynn had acquired a papal bull to enable these to be performed in the chapel so long as it was not to the derogation of the parish church. Bishop Alnwick, after investigation, was to allow the privilege with certain conditions. However, perhaps because the townspeople balked at these conditions, the change was never effected.³

A major event in parish community life seems to have been the celebration of the patronal feast of the parish church. There are three cases of changes being made to the dates when this was celebrated.⁴ In two, the reason for the change was because the feast fell too often within the Easter period, which meant that the parish feast day was superseded, and in one the original feast of 31 December was presumably too close to Christmas.⁵ The chapter of

1. Linc. Reg., f 34.

2. CPL, vol. IX, p 63 (1439).

3. *The Book of Margery Kempe*, ed. S.B. Meech and H.E. Allen, EETS, vol. CCXII (1940), pp 1, 58-60, 372-4. Margery was very much opposed to the project. Her account is a useful counter-balance to the more usual narratives which see the ecclesiastical authorities deliberately obstructing the will of the majority. See, e.g., *The Making of King's Lynn. A Documentary Survey*, ed. D.M. Owen (Oxford, 1984), pp 29, 140-1.

4. Cf. Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, p 48.

5. St Mary's Feltwell, Norwich diocese (Norw. Reg., f 112); St Peter's Leicester (Linc. Reg., f 37); Horncastle (Linc. Reg., f 41).

New College, Leicester asked for an additional feast day as, according to the rite of Sarum' which they used, they should have two 'commemorative' feast days a week, one for their own saint of dedication and one for Mary. As the college was dedicated to St. Mary, they only had one and so petitioned to be allowed to commemorate weekly in celebration of the Holy Trinity as well. Bishop Alnwick, granted their request '*presertim quod ad cultus divini augmentacionem tendere videantur*'.² Such evidence of dedication to local churches and patron saints is worth remembering when the bishop's disciplinary role is under consideration.

This dedication was displayed in a practical way by those who sought the bishop's support for their improvement of the physical state of their churches. Alnwick's major method of supporting such work seems to have been in authorising collections for the upkeep or rebuilding of dilapidated churches, and granting indulgences to contributors.³ Parish churches supported in this way were Welton, which had been destroyed by fire, and Asgardby.⁴ A fuller record survives of the grant in favour of the Gilbertine priory of St Saviour at Bridge End in Lincolnshire which had been destroyed by fire.⁵ All who gave aid to the priory, especially all parish priests who supported the priory's collectors, were granted an indulgence of forty days.⁶ Such indulgences were dependent not only on support of the charitable aim. The recipients could not receive the benefits of the indulgence unless they were penitent of

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1. For the influence of the rite of Sarum, see Edwards, 'Salisbury Cathedral', pp 153-8.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 59v; LCS, vol. III, p 520.
 3. Collectors, whether for the fabric of the church or for alms for hospitals and almshouses, needed the bishop's licence whether or not they already had papal sanction. Churchill claims that there were frequent attempts to collect without papal or diocesan licences (*Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, p 130).
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 42v, 72. Owen remarks that the 'general growth of popular religious activity of the period' after 1350 'was marked by appeals for national support in the form of indulgences granted...to those who aided rebuilding' (*Church and Society*, p 114).
 5. Linc. Reg., f 57.
 6. The maximum a bishop was qualified to grant (*Provinciale*, p 336).

their sins and had received absolution after confession to a suitable priest. The indulgence for St Saviour's illustrates Bishop Alnwick's concern to maintain control over such collections; the grant which was made in February 1445 was limited to the following six months.

Such licences to collect were not confined to communities within Alnwick's own dioceses. Perhaps the most interesting indulgence granted by Alnwick was that to the English College in Rome.¹ The grant described his belief in the need to accumulate graces before judgement, and the work of the hospital of the Trinity and St Thomas in Rome in offering hospitality to all pilgrims, especially from England. All clergy and laity giving alms to the nuncios, and prayers for the work of the college, were awarded an indulgence with the usual terms. If this indulgence illustrates Alnwick's awareness of the wider Christian community, the sixth, and final, indulgence perhaps says something about the fifteenth-century church's understanding of the interconnection between individuals and the community of the faithful. In 1437, Bishop Alnwick granted an indulgence to all '*parochianis nostris*', and others of whatever diocese, who, truly penitent and confessed, were present at the Easter celebrations in the parish church of Hitchin and prayed there for the soul of John Flexman, buried there, his parents and all the faithful.² Whether or not one agrees with Alnwick's and the contemporary church's belief in the efficacy of indulgences, there is no evidence here of cynicism in the application of these beliefs in his grants. It would probably be wrong to look for it.³

The records reveal little of the actual procedure that was followed in granting these dispensations, licences and grants. It

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1. Linc. Reg., ff. 31v-2 (no date). *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, pp cxlvi-cxlvii, has some description of the difficulties of the college and its dependence on alms from England. Chichele granted it similar licences.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 28v.
 3. For a balanced view of indulgences, see W.E. Lunt, *Papal Revenues in the Middle Ages*, vol. I (New York, 1934), pp 112-24.

appears that the initiative for a dispensation came not from the bishop but from the proposed beneficiary and/or his supporters.¹ Even individuals in receipt of papal bulls of dispensation had to bring these before the bishop for his confirmation. In many cases a formal inquiry was instituted to ensure that the facts were as stated and that the proposed privilege would not be to the detriment of some other party. Grants, when made, often contained the saving clause that they should not be to the prejudice of named individuals or corporations such as the bishop, his cathedral chapter, or the parish church and clergy most nearly involved.

The only mention of fees made in the records of these dispensations was the note made in 1444 that Thomas Robynson, acolyte, was granted letters dimissory with all fees remitted.² However, the accounts of John Wardale, commissary of the archdeaconry of Leicester for the years 1439/40-42/3,³ give some idea of the income that the bishop could expect to gain from such grants. 3s 4d would seem to have been the normal yearly charge for churches put out to farm.⁴ Total receipts from this source in the archdeaconry of Leicester were £3 1s 8d in 1441-42 and £1 6s 8d in 1442-43. Similarly, a later account reveals that letters dimissory were issued at 3s 4d; that licences granted to questors - those making charitable collections - had prices, which seem to bear some relation to the number of archdeaconries a licence was granted for, ranging from 6s 8d to £4; and that licences for non-residence and private oratories were mostly 6s 8d, although some of the former were charged at 3s 4d.⁵ These fees do not seem excessive, bearing

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1. This is illustrated by the cases of the proposed hermit of Sudbury, whose case was presented by his fellow parishioners, and by the submission by the priors provincial of the friars of candidates to act as general confessors.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 49v.
 3. LAO: BP Accounts 5.
 4. *Ibid.*, mm 4, 6. The maximum charge recorded was 6s 8d for (among others) the church of Drayton in 1441-2 (m 4). This may have been a charge for two years. Certainly none of the churches so charged appear in the subsequent account.
 5. LAO: BP Accounts 7 (Spiritualities 1499-1500), pp 17-22. These figures agree with the sixteenth-century sums cited by M. Bowker, *An Episcopal Court Book for the Diocese of Lincoln, 1514-1520*, p xxi.

in mind the costs which were, no doubt, incurred in investigating claims and issuing licences. Although the bishop's power to grant licences and dispensations added to his revenues, it is clearly 'facile to think that licences were granted because of fees'.

Dispensations were dated from wherever the bishop or his commissary happened to be, but a few of the locations may have been significant. For example, Alnwick was visiting the Markyate convent when he granted Thomas Wykelwood, rector of Toddington, a licence to preach to the nuns and hear their confessions.² The bishop's authority to dispense and grant licences was very rarely delegated, and when it was a specific commission was usually made.³ The only exception seems to have been when John Derby (one of Alnwick's leading legal assistants) acted in assigning a pension to Thomas My, former rector of Abbots Ripton.⁴ He may well have been specifically commissioned to act. Indeed, this grant was recorded in Alnwick's court book, and the pension was opposed by the priest incumbent, so it is not properly classified as an exercise of the bishop's grace. It should be seen, rather, as an instance case, which Derby was fully qualified to hear.

Thus it is clear that Alnwick exercised a very firm hold over his gracious authority to dispense with canon law. Although the evidence is scarce, it would seem that grants were only made after proper investigation and after the recipient's agreement to reasonable conditions had been made. In exercising his authority, Bishop Alnwick acted fully in accordance with the norm while using his own judgement and, occasionally, his compassion to care for the spiritual wellbeing of his people. It would seem fair to conclude that as with papal dispensations, so with episcopal grants, 'it is certain that those responsible for upholding church law were more concerned with a pastoral responsibility than with the letter of the rules'.⁵

1. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 61.

2. Linc. Reg., f 43.

3. Churchill (*Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, p 130) notes this point.

4. Court book, p 9.

5. Thomson, 'Well of Grace', p 105.

2. The Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of the Bishop

The reverse side of the coin which comprised the bishop's power to dispense with canon law was his judicial authority to act in his courts against those who transgressed that law. As *judex ordinarius*, the bishop was the highest authority for spiritual offenders and cases in his diocese.¹ By the later middle ages, English bishops had two main courts. One, the consistory court, presided over by the official principal, was usually situated in the cathedral city. The other, the bishop's court of audience, travelled with him and was presided over by the bishop himself, or his commissaries. There was no appeal from the consistory court to the court of audience as both were regarded equally as courts of the bishop.²

Lack of sources prevents significant study of Bishop Alnwick's consistory courts. However, his registers, and the two surviving parts of his court books,³ supplemented by one or two other records,⁴ facilitate at least a partial study of the working of his courts of audience. The nature of the two main surviving records make it difficult to make a meaningful comparison between the spiritual crimes and the exercise of ecclesiastical justice in William Alnwick's two dioceses. This is because, while the Lincoln court book provides instances of almost all the cases that might come within the bishop's purview, the Norwich court book concentrates on only one kind of crime: heresy. Nevertheless, an attempt will be made to do so.

The dangers inherent in taking an uncritical view of such sources should, perhaps, be stated at the outset. By their very nature, judicial records tend to show the most negative aspects of a community. Moreover, it should be remembered that an accusation is not only not the same as proof of a misdemeanour but it may also

1. *Eng. Clergy*, p 41. For his duties as a judge, see *Provinciale*, pp 67-9, 98.

2. C. Morris, 'A Consistory Court in the Middle Ages', pp 151-2.

3. Discussed above, pp 7-9.

4. Cited below as they occur.

have been made with the aim of achieving some end other than the conviction of a defendant. This is an especially important warning to note in view of the small proportion of cases whose outcome is recorded.¹

The judicial duties of the bishop were twofold. The correction and bringing to repentance of those who had offended against the church's laws was known as *ex officio* or 'office' jurisdiction. He also had a quite separate duty to bring disputes to an end, preferably by persuading the parties to come to agreement, but, failing that, by determining who was in the right. As cases were brought by the parties themselves, *ad instanciam partium*, this was known as 'instance' jurisdiction.² The bishop's activities as arbitrator, encouraging his subjects to compose their differences, enshrined as it was in canon law,³ is perhaps one of the clearest illustrations that remain of his role as a benign father to his spiritual children.

a) The Bishop as Fount of Justice: Instance Cases Heard in
Bishop Alnwick's Courts

In the later middle ages, the bulk of cases of first instance seem, in most dioceses, to have been tried by the bishop's official principal in the consistory court. Alnwick's two dioceses were not exceptions to this rule.⁴ The activities of Bishop Alnwick's ministers in instance cases in both his dioceses is illustrated not only by the case which was dismissed from Alnwick's court of audience because it was already in progress in the Lincoln consistory court,⁵ but also by the significations of excommunication which Bishop Alnwick sent to the royal chancery because of contumacy in instance cases before his officials and

1. See below, pp 174, 208.

2. Morris, 'Consistory Court', pp 150-1.

3. *Provinciale*, pp 73-4. See also E. Powell 'Arbitration and the Law', especially p 59.

4. Morris, 'Consistory Court', pp 153-3.

5. Court book, p 44.

commissaries general.¹ Nevertheless, the bishop's court of audience did hear instance cases. Cases could come before him on appeal from lower courts or from the bishop's commissaries or even, on occasions, be remitted there from the archbishop of Canterbury's court of Arches.² A number of cases also came directly to the court of audience, the bulk of plaintiffs perhaps being from the higher levels of society.³

Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln court book and register record thirty-nine cases which illustrate his role as arbitrator.⁴ This number may, in fact, be smaller than the real figure as some, at least, of the office cases may have started as instance cases. The suggestion that it was the more powerful people in society who used the bishop's audience court is lent some credence by the fact that among the plaintiffs were a prior, a gentleman and a lord. Easy access to the bishop would also seem to have been an advantage. Five of the cases were initiated by Alnwick's commissary, Master John Derby, and his two principal scribes, Thomas Colstone and John Bugg.

Two of three cases brought by Colstone in 1445 accused Robert Grene of Fleet Sutton and John Bell, rector of Careby, of subversion of the bishop's rights.⁵ In neither case is the actual offence stated although Colstone accused Grene of '*subraccione*

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1. PRO: C 85/112/5, 6, 14, 22, 24, 29, 30, 31, 37, 43 (Lincoln); C 85/137/38, 41 (Norwich). These are only the cases where one can be sure that the original was an instance case. See Logan, *Excommunication and the Secular Arm*, for a useful study based almost entirely on this class of records. See also Table IV for an attempt to analyse the causes of such significations during Alnwick's episcopates.
 2. D.M. Owen, 'An Episcopal Audience Court', pp 140-9 in *Legal Records and the Historian*, ed. J.H. Baker (1978), pp 141-2.
 3. Woodcock (*Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, pp 104-5) certainly thought this was true of the archbishop's court of audience, and there is little reason to doubt that diocesan courts were similar.
 4. There is no evidence remaining of his instance role in the diocese of Norwich, although some of the unions of churches may have arisen out of arbitrations by the bishop.
 5. Court book, pp 79-80.

iurium spiritualium episcopaliū...et officio registri...per eum debitorum'. Certainly, the registrar was protecting his own position just as much as that of the bishop. The outcome of neither case is very clear. The dean, who had been commissioned to cite Grene, certified that he had withdrawn to Sutton and all that was recorded of Bell, after three sessions, was '*satisfecit et dimissus est*'.

About a third of all recorded instance cases were between members of the clergy and most of them related, in some way or another, to the relationship of the incumbent either to his predecessor or to an appropriating religious house. Two cases relating to pensions owed by rectors to religious houses are recorded in the bishop's register. In 1444, Brother Richard Barton, prior of St Leonard's at Stamford, successfully sought the reinstatement of an annual pension of five marks which had been paid, time out of mind, by rectors of St Mary's ad Pontem, Stamford, to the prior.¹ The other case is more complicated. The prior and convent of the Gilbertine priory at Alvingham brought a case complaining of the non-payment of an annual pension of £10 owed to the priory by the rectors of 'Germthorpe'.² The solution they sought for the priory's poverty was not that the rectors should be forced to pay the pension but that the whole church should be appropriated to the priory, which would then provide a suitable stipendiary priest to serve the parish. Thus, this was not so much a complaint as a disguised request for appropriation. Unfortunately, the result of the prior's action is not known as the record breaks off in the middle of the bishop's commission to Thomas Balscot to act in the matter.³

In contrast to the above were four cases in which appropriating houses were the defendants. Two vicars sought augmentation of their vicarages. The non-appearance of the abbot and convent of Waltham Abbey to answer the claim of Robert Resshe, vicar of All

1. Linc. Reg., ff 48.

2. Grainthorpe?

3. Linc. Reg., f 77v - the register has no folios 78-9.

Saints Hertford, for an augmentation of his vicarage resulted in the sequestration of the fruits of the church (presumably the rectory). The final outcome is not known.¹ The case brought by the vicar of Anwick against the prior of Haverholme was perhaps less acrimonious. After some discussion, Thomas Balscot, with the consent of both parties, adjourned the continuation of the case for a month in the hope that the parties would come to an agreement. As no more was recorded in the court book, it is possible that they did.² Instance procedure was followed in 1445 in the case of the vicarage of Kidlington, appropriated to Osney Abbey.³ Nevertheless, it would seem that Bishop Alnwick himself initiated these proceedings after having received, in the course of his visitation of the parish, complaints of the Kidlington parishioners that their vicar could not afford to pay a parish chaplain.⁴

Even after an augmentation had been awarded, it was not all plain sailing for an impoverished vicar. For example, Thomas, vicar of Salford in Bedfordshire, complained that, despite an augmentation of his vicarage by John Depyng, the bishop's commissary, the proprietor, the prior of Newnham, had refused to pay the extra sum for two years.⁵ Such failures were not always malicious. Although the prior of Alvingham claimed that after appropriation he would ensure the provision of a suitable parish priest, the very poverty which had led him to seek the appropriation might in future prevent him from fulfilling that promise.⁶

1. *Ibid.*, f 60.

2. Court book, p 53. In December 1439, Archbishop Chichele had promulgated a constitution for the augmentation of poor vicarages (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, p cli; vol. III, pp 286-7). This provided that the vicars of impoverished vicarages might sue for augmentation of their living without fee. The rectors or proprietors were bound to assign a reasonable sum, of at least twelve marks, out of the fruits of the church.

3. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 63v-64v.

4. *The Cartulary of Osney Abbey*, ed. H.E. Salter, vol. IV, OHS, vol. XCVII (1934), pp 121-9.

5. *Linc. Reg.*, f 63 (no date).

6. For a judicious view of the effect of appropriation, see Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 181-2.

Complaints were not only made about monastic rectors. The failure of secular rectors to meet their obligations might result not only in office cases brought by their ecclesiastical superiors¹ but also in instance cases brought by their successors. In 1443, William Redal, rector of Northborough, brought a case against his predecessor Master John Atkynson for the repair of defects in the church's chancel and rectory. The outcome of this case, which was to be determined by Master John Wardale,² is unknown. While this was an apparent case of neglect of recognised duties, the inhabitants of Woodstock and Bladon needed a composition from the bishop to tell them what their duties of maintenance were. This dispute related to the obligations of the residents of Woodstock, which had its own chapel of St Mary Magdalene, to contribute to the upkeep of the mother church of Bladon. It would seem that the bishop in his role of arbitrator managed to establish a composition which was agreeable to all.³

Most of the cases discussed so far were cases of principle affecting more than just a few individuals. Their importance is perhaps reflected in the fact that most of them are recorded in Alnwick's episcopal registers and not in his court book. Cases between individuals are perhaps more representative of the bishop's instance jurisdiction. There were two reported cases of defamation. A woman called Margaret brought a '*causa diffamacionis*' against a man who had publicly asserted that she and her children had broken fences.⁴ Similarly, Thomas and Elizabeth Garthyn accused the vicar of Halton of defaming them by accusing them of stealing from his vicarage.⁵ These cases were, very possibly, an attempt to avoid prosecution for the offence mentioned in the supposed defamation.⁶

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1. See below.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 40.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 64v-65v (1445). See below, pp 284-5, for Alnwick's arbitration between Lord Dacre and Crowland Abbey.
 4. Court book, p 97.
 5. *Ibid.*, p 77; neither case is dated.
 6. Woodcock (*Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*) p 88, states that the majority of plaintiffs in the archbishop of Canterbury's courts seem to have been trying to clear themselves of charges which might be brought against them. (ctd on next page)

Nine cases relating to the withholding of dues owed to parish churches came before Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln court of audience.¹ Thomas Carter of North Marston, who impeded oblations for the purification of women, saying that it was better to give alms to the poor, may have been suspected of heresy, although this is not stated. It seems more likely that his was the not unintelligible response to the perceived bad behaviour of the vicar, Walter Bud.² Two men, Thomas of Asgarby and William Coke of Fordington were accused of withholding money due from their lands which should have provided for particular expenses of the rector.³ There were six cases in the Lincoln diocese relating to the withholding of tithes.⁴ A tithe case from Potter Heigham in the Norwich diocese progressed from Alnwick's consistory court via the court of Canterbury to the apostolic see. Eventually, it returned to Alnwick as the pope, on the appeal of the vicar John Thome, commissioned him, together with the bishop of London and the archdeacon of Chichester, to execute the papal sentence on the defendant, John Bere of Hickling.⁵

Ten cases of '*fidei lesionis et perjurii*' are recorded in the Lincoln court book. They might also have been heard in secular courts, but the bishop's ability to act summarily in cases of breach of contract or debt made episcopal courts popular for such

(ctd) They occasionally even brought cases of defamation when they had already been found guilty of the alleged crime in the lay courts, although this was forbidden.

1. Some of these cases, particularly the first, may be discipline rather than instance cases. Nevertheless, they are brought together here because of their similarity.
2. Court book, p 104; *Eng. Clergy*, p 238. For Bud, see below, pp 183-4, 187.
3. Coke should have provided a light to burn in front of the crucifix in Ulceby church and had refused to do so for seven of the twenty-one years he had occupied the appropriate land (Court book, p 42). Thomas was refusing to pay for a trental owed from his lands (Court book, p 95). In the latter case, both parties promised to obey arbitrators appointed by the judge, John Derby.
4. Court book, pp 63, 65, 68, 80, 96, 106.
5. *CPL*, vol. VIII, pp 502-3. For a discussion of the general question of the parochial clergy and tithes, see Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 147-59.

cases.¹ The bishop's jurisdiction over these cases derived from the spiritual nature of the offence of breaking one's word. A plaintiff could thus bring the weight of the bishop's spiritual authority to bear in cases which might otherwise drag on for years in the lay courts. Nevertheless, the resolution of not one of these cases was recorded.² In fact in only one case was the matter in dispute actually recorded. Godfrey Bales accused John Dervag of Sausthorpe of reneging on a debt of twenty-four shillings.³ In at least seven of the cases the defendant did not appear when first cited and so was suspended by the judge at the request of the plaintiff. In the case brought by John Derby against Robert Horn of Spalding in 1447, the defendant failed to appear twice. Accordingly, Derby's colleague, Thomas Balscot, excommunicated Horn for his contumacy.⁴

It would be wrong to think that, because few of the cases of *fidel lesionis et perjurii* seem to have come to a conclusion, the episcopal court was failing the plaintiffs. For many, the mere establishment of a case with its concomitant ecclesiastical censures was probably enough to bring about satisfaction.⁵ This was not the case with matrimonial causes. The judges could not allow these to go undecided, 'for the relationships between the parties to such suits had to be clarified'.⁶

Six cases concerning marriage are recorded as coming before William Alnwick during his Lincoln episcopate. The dispute between John Coly and Katherine Hummanby of Asgarby is not recorded;⁷ nor is the reason why Matilda Tymmes was seeking a divorce from Thomas

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1. Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, pp 89-91.
 2. Court book, pp 1, 24, 44, 47, 65, 76, 79, 80, 98. Alnwick's servants John Bugg, John Derby and Thomas Colstone were the plaintiffs respectively in the cases recorded on pp 24, 47, 79.
 3. *Ibid.*, p 44.
 4. *Ibid.*, p 47.
 5. Cf. the similar use of the small claims courts today. See also Powell, 'Arbitration and the Law', p 51.
 6. Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, p 83.
 7. Court book, p 53 (1449).

Ilberd of Amington.¹ A divorce could only occur if the marriage was null and void because of some insuperable impediment, such as a living spouse or because of non-consummation. In 1445, the unconsummated marriage of Henry Nykke and Agnes Lyndesey was declared null and void by the bishop, who instructed two local incumbents to publish his sentence in their churches.² In the same year, he responded to the complaint of Joan Burdet that her husband, John Fulnetby, who '*prope frigide nature existit*' had proved unable or unwilling to consummate their marriage, by commissioning John Percy, canon of Lincoln cathedral, and John Tylney, doctors of canon law, to proceed in the divorce.³

Finally, two cases of desertion came before the bishop. In 1445, John Bussy claimed that Agnes Sutton had left him without cause. Alnwick seems to have been prepared to hear her side of the argument for he appointed the parties a place and date to hear his decision about their 'divorce', and commissioned John Percy to act in the case.⁴ If there is some doubt about the bishop's view of who had the right in this case, there is no doubting his sympathy for Emma Dekyn of St. Botolph's. In 1443, she complained that her husband had left her and their children, and gone to the diocese of Hereford where he was living with another woman. In response to her appeal, '*eidemque muliere paterne compacientis*', Alnwick wrote to Bishop Spofford of Hereford, requesting that he proceed in the case.⁵

Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln records thus provide examples of at least some of the instance cases which might occur in the episcopal

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1. *Ibid.*, p 86. John Leek was specially commissioned to act in the case by the bishop. Thomas did not appear and so was declared contumacious and excommunicated.
 2. Linc. Reg., f 76.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 56v-57. For the unconsummated marriage of Thomas Tuddenham and Alice Wodehouse, see below, pp 189-90.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 65v. The bishop's sympathies may have inclined towards this daughter of Hamo Sutton, mayor of the Staple at Calais, with whom he is known to have had dealings (see below, pp 315-6, 334-5).
 5. Linc. Reg., f 37v.

courts. There is only one case which might have related to the execution of a will.¹ Otherwise, instance procedure in Alnwick's court of audience would seem to accord with that described by B.L.Woodcock.² Cases were brought before the bishop on the appeal of one or more plaintiff. On a number of occasions, proctors were appointed to act for the plaintiff and/or defendant.³ The plaintiff requested that the court's officials cite the defendant, and if they failed to appear it was at the request of the plaintiff that the defendant was suspended or excommunicated.⁴ Few cases, apart from the matrimonial ones, reached a definitive sentence in court, and in all cases the bishop's role was more that of an arbitrator than a disciplinary judge. For a view of the bishop as disciplinarian, it is necessary to turn to the cases which came to his court of audience '*ex mero officio*'.

b) The Bishop's Disciplinary Role: 'Office' Cases in
Bishop Alnwick's Courts

(i) The Cases

The bishop's court of audience could hear any case that fell within the bishop's jurisdiction, either directly or by appeal from the lesser courts of the archdeacons and the bishop's commissaries, who could also refer cases to the bishop. In addition, certain crimes were reserved to the bishop's jurisdiction.⁵ The most commonly quoted categories were perjury, wilful murder, usury, the corruption of maidens and nuns, assaults on clerks, breaches of sanctuary, breaches of episcopal estates, hindrance of episcopal

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1. Court book, p 80: Margaret Hosier alias Lovell and John Bird, executors of John Hosier, brought a case '*super fidel lesioni*' against William Grene, rector of Welton.
 2. *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, *passim*, especially pp 50-60, 85-101.
 3. Court book, p 98; *Linc. Reg.*, ff 63v-65v.
 4. Cf. Powell, 'Arbitration and the Law', p 51, for the failure of defendants in civil cases to appear in the royal courts.
 5. Owen, 'Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in England', pp 200-1.

officials and other offences against the rights and liberties of the see.¹ Cases of almost all these kinds, and many more, came before Alnwick or his commissaries during his episcopates. In all, the registers and court books give evidence of the disciplining of some 450 people in his two dioceses. Eighteen clerks, sixty laymen, and eleven laywomen in the diocese of Norwich,² and 140 clerks, 200 laymen and thirty-six laywomen in the diocese of Lincoln experienced the force of Bishop Alnwick's jurisdiction. The overwhelming preponderance of male lay criminals in the diocese of Lincoln is redressed when the accomplices of the accused (the majority of crimes being sexual) are added into the equation. This produces a total more of the order of 220 laymen and 150 laywomen.

It is perhaps worth restating the facts that neither of the bishop's court books cover anything like the full period of either of his episcopates; the Norwich court book only refers to one species of crime; and neither, as records of episcopal courts of audience, encompass cases which came before his inferiors. Finally, an accusation is not the same as a conviction and judicial records provide only a partial, and slanted, view on the 'morals' of a society. This point is perhaps doubly important when judicial records are used as sources for the condition of the late medieval clergy.

The clerks who came to the notice of Bishop Alnwick or his ministers in his two dioceses were accused of many crimes.³ If a man could fail in one obligation, he might be accused of any number

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1. See, for example, *Eng. Clergy*, pp 55-6, and Bowker, *An Episcopal Court Book*, pp xij-xiij. The list bears a remarkable resemblance to the crimes reserved to the bishop's absolution in the appointment of confessors (see above, p 145).
 2. To which may be added between fourteen and forty Lollards mentioned by Foxe (vol. III, pp 584-7, 592-3, 596-7, 599-600), the higher number being those people who were named in the *Trials* as associates of defendants but who may not actually have been tried. Foxe seems to have made numerous repetitions.
 3. See Table V. The disparity in some of the figures between tables and text is explained by the number of men who were accused of multiple offences.

of faults. Many of the clerks disciplined in the Lincoln diocese were accused of multiple crimes. The clerk with the doubtful privilege of being accused of the largest number of failings was Roger Bill, rector of Aspenden. He was accused of not celebrating mass in his church on feast days; not celebrating obits; not residing and leaving his church unofficiated; selling his rectory and his church house; selling the lead from the chancel roof and re-covering it with tiles; refusing to celebrate two marriages unless he was paid 20d; refusing to administer the rite of purification to Margaret Darlyng, a poor parishioner, unless her neighbours paid her expenses; maliciously pursuing parishioners who offended him through the court of Arches; and refusing to visit the poor on their deathbeds and administer the last rites to them.¹

Bill clearly failed in many of the canonical requirements of an incumbent. These included residence (unless dispensed otherwise); preaching at least four times a year; visiting sick parishioners; saying all the offices, mass in particular, daily; hearing the confessions of all his parishioners at least yearly and administering communion to them at least three times; and living an exemplary life, which included wearing suitable clothes and avoiding taverns, brothels, and any women who were not above suspicion.²

Bill's neglect was not unique. Twenty-three incumbents (including eight vicars) in the Lincoln diocese were cited for unlicensed non-residence for periods ranging from four months to six years.³ As licences for non-residence were often combined with

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1. Court book, pp 10-11; printed in *Eng. Clergy*, p 235. (*Eng. Clergy*, pp 204-46 contains a transcript of about one quarter of the original text. References to the court book below will be followed by references to *Eng. Clergy* where appropriate. However, a reference to *Eng. Clergy*, after a multiple reference to the court book does not imply that all cases mentioned in the text are to be found in the printed edition. N.B. Many cases are undated).
 2. *Provinciale*, pp 54-67. See also Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 4-8; 184, 326-43, and Bowker, *Secular Clergy*, p 110.
 3. The four month absentee was the vicar of Wooburn Episcopi - one of the bishop's own manors. (ctd on next page)

licences to farm out church lands, so one might expect to see a number of unlicensed non-residents letting out their benefices to farm.¹ In fact only two of the absentees, the rectors of Linwood and Linley, were cited for this.² Ambrose Vitell, rector of All Saints Sawtry, who alienated the goods and fruits of his church, may well have been committing similar crimes.³

Six of the absentee incumbents, including one vicar, seem to have been pluralists. The worst offender was Thomas Humphrey, rector of Marsh Gibbon, who had been admitted to another church in the earl of Suffolk's patronage, and also served as parish priest at Tring.⁴ In addition, three men seem to have been suspected of pluralism without being accused of non-residence. For example, Robert Pasmer, vicar of Great Gaddesden, was also rector of Barwell.⁵ The remaining two defendants were not incumbents but chaplains, so their offence may perhaps be regarded as less heinous. John Belkelyng, a chantry chaplain was found to have an incompatible benefice. Simon Wool, parish chaplain of Luton, was accused of having that chapel and the church of Tewin and collecting two stipends in the archdeaconry of Bedford.⁶

As one might expect, often those who neglected cure of souls also failed to maintain the physical structures of both the chancel of the church and their own houses.⁷ Three of the non-residents were accused of such physical neglect.⁸ The frequently used term '*ruinosus*' apparently indicated that a building was in need of, and

(ctd) (Cf. Linc. Reg., ff 60v-61; Court book, p 91). William Stevens, rector of Tring had been absent for six years (Court book, p 35).

1. *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, p 117, also makes this connection.
2. Court book, pp 16, 70; *Eng. Clergy*, p 231.
3. *Ibid.*, pp 2, 10-11; *Eng. Clergy*, p 241.
4. Court book, p 83; *Eng. Clergy*, p 233. For the other non-resident pluralists, see Court book, pp 23, 38, 43, 51, 62; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 231, 236-7.
5. Court book, p 10.
6. Linc. Reg., f 125v; Court book, p 34. Tewin is, in fact, in Hertfordshire and thus in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.
7. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 140.
8. Court book, pp 51, 2, 83; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 231, 233.

not beyond, repair.¹ Whatever the adjective means, a considerable number of even the resident clergy seem to have been unable to keep their buildings up to an approved level. Two rectors, John Marshall, rector of Hamerton, and the rector of Ayot St Lawrence, had neglected both the chancel and the rectory.² John Kereby, master of the chantries in Leek and Leverton, had allowed them to fall into such disrepair that he was replaced by one of his fellow chaplains.³

Such evidence should not, perhaps, be taken as an indication of wholesale neglect of churches in the diocese. It must be remembered that this was a period of numerous rebuilding projects throughout England which more than counteract the evidence for decay.⁴ A much larger number of clergy (eighteen rectors and two vicars) was accused of the lesser crime of allowing their own house to fall into disrepair. It may have been real hardship that had caused Henry Langham, vicar of Great Gaddesden, to sell his manse and allow it to be ruined.⁵

The register of Abbot Curteys of Bury St Edmunds records the one known case of dilapidation during Alnwick's Norwich episcopate. In 1435, Curteys appealed to Alnwick to deprive Simon Trewe, perpetual vicar of Thurston, a church appropriated to the abbey. Curteys claimed that the buildings, walls and enclosures were in complete disrepair because the vicar had been applying the fruits of the church to 'profane purposes', and that the souls of the parishioners were endangered by the vicar's incumbency. Trewe eventually resigned his incumbency in November 1436.⁶

1. Bowker, *Secular Clergy*, p 129.

2. Court book, pp 15, 40. John Marshall was pursued through the bishop's courts for various crimes between 1444 and 1449 (*ibid.*, pp 12, 15, 34, 40).

3. *Ibid.*, p 95.

4. *Eng. Clergy*, p 128.

5. Court book, p 33. One should perhaps not be too charitable to him as he was also accused of violently attacking another priest. Other references to dilapidation are: Court book, pp 14-16 (a group of thirteen), 31, 35, 67, 71, 73, 90.

6. BL: Add. Ms. 14848 (Register of Abbot Curteys of Bury St Edmunds, 1429-46, part I), f 185.

The final victims of physical neglect of church houses were the incumbents themselves or their successors.¹ Neglect of their spiritual duties was more serious. The three vicars and one rector cited for failing to supply chaplains to serve in their parishes and dependant chapels might have been able to plead poverty as an excuse for their failure (although none did).² Robert Alcock, priest of Gedney, who had not celebrated mass in the six months leading up to Easter 1446 was found to be '*mente alienati*'.³ Few others can have had such excuses. Nine rectors and two vicars were accused of neglect, ranging from complete absence to omitting particular ceremonies.⁴

In addition to this general neglect of cures, much of which was a reflection of simple non-residence, a number of incumbents were accused of failing as parish priests in more specific ways. Perhaps most heinous was the withholding of the sacraments from the dying.⁵ In 1447, Richard Roper, vicar of Frampton, managed to purge himself of the accusation that he had not only refused to baptise the child of William Claymond, but had also prevented the parish chaplain from doing so, with the result that it died unbaptised.⁶ Both Gilbert Haksmale, rector of Hertingfordbury, and William Chamburlayne, vicar of Carlton le Moorland, allowed parishioners to die without the sacraments, and Chamburlayne compounded his crime by leaving two parishioners unburied for a day and a night.⁷ The fact that Roger Bill was the only other priest accused of this may indicate that it was a mercifully rare occurrence.

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1. For a case brought by such a successor, see above, p 170.
 2. Court book, pp 81, 90, 103, 108; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 232-3. One of them, David Olton, vicar of Kirkton in Holland, denied his accusation and was allowed to purge himself (p 81).
 3. Court book, p 46; *Eng. Clergy*, p 229.
 4. Court book, pp 2, 71, 73, 76, 85; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 231-2, 241; *Linc. Reg.*, f 30v.
 5. For the parish priest's obligation to visit the sick speedily, see *Provinciale*, p 63.
 6. Court book, p 48.
 7. *Ibid.*, pp 27, 64; *Eng. Clergy*, p 237.

In contrast to those who withheld the sacraments was John Baron, vicar of Saltby. In solemnising a marriage after only one reading of the banns, he was guilty of administering the sacraments improperly.¹ Similarly, Richard Hervy, a parish chaplain, may be said to have been suffering from an excess of enthusiasm (were it not for his other crimes) when he celebrated mass twice in one day.² In 1446, Robert Est, parish chaplain of Baumber by Horncastle managed to purge himself of the accusation that he had administered the sacraments of penance and eucharist to a man suspended from receiving them.³ He was also accused (and purged himself) of causing his parishioners to err in their reception of the sacraments.⁴ It was, no doubt, two similarly unpopular priests who were accused of giving no hospitality.⁵

A number of the clergy were suspected of being unlawfully beneficed through some insufficiency either in themselves or in the manner in which they obtained their churches. Four men were suspected of not having letters of ordination, and thus, presumably, of not being properly ordained.⁶ Two incumbents were found unsuitable for cure of souls because of their lack of learning. Robert Mate was deprived of the vicarage of Bengoe, although Alnwick's anger seems, rightly, to have been aimed at the patrons, Bermondsey Abbey, rather than the priest. Thomas Dale, rector of Fletton, fared rather better. Although found '*inhabilem ad curam quod non intellegit que legit*', he was admitted to his cure on condition that he studied for two years and presented himself to the bishop for examination after three. In 1446, he was examined on his literacy and his suitability for the cure of souls,

1. Court book, p 68.

2. *Ibid.*, p 84. It was only on exceptional days that more than one mass was allowed to be celebrated (Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 6). The name of the parish he was attached to is illegible.

3. Court book, p 45, *Eng. Clergy*, pp 228-9.

4. Court book, p 45; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 228-9.

5. Robert Sturman, rector of Berkhamstead St Peter, and Giles Chawcere, rector of Conington (Court book, pp 84, 28; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 232, 236). Cf. *Loci e Libro*, p 43.

6. Court book, pp 84, 62, 58, 19; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 231, 243-4.

and was found satisfactory.¹ This confirms the impression that Bishop Alnwick attempted to ensure the quality of the parochial clergy.²

These men had, at least, obtained their benefices legally. Not so John atte Medwe, who, in 1429, had been instituted into the vicarage of Metton in the diocese of Norwich, claiming, untruthfully, that the previous vicar had resigned.³ Three rectors were accused of paying or promising to pay the patron for presenting them.⁴ Richard Ilston, vicar of Wingrave, John Fill, rector of Clothall, and Walter Searle, portioner of Waddesdon, were all accused of persuading their predecessors to resign by promising to pay them pensions.⁵ The line between what constituted simony and the compassion which allowed an aged incumbent to retire with a pension was a very thin one. The bishop's judges presumably believed that these men had kept on the right side of it as all were allowed to purge themselves.⁶

The reported efforts of such men to further their careers is in marked contrast to the only case relating to a married clerk.⁷ The case of John Nowers, despite being incomplete, takes up more space than any other in the Lincoln court book. The seriousness with which Alnwick regarded the crime is attested not only by the fact that he himself, towards the end of his life (1449), acted as judge, but also by the accusation of heresy aimed at Nowers for the suspected belief that deacons might legally marry. It is perhaps significant that the only other married clerk in holy orders that Alnwick is known to have come across was the great heresiarch

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1. Linc. Reg., f 176v; Court book, pp 1, 4; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 242-3 (Dale).
 2. See above, pp 135, 148-9.
 3. Norw. Reg., ff 36v-37.
 4. Court book, pp 2, 40; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 238, 241.
 5. Court book, pp 86, 2, 85; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 239-40, 240, 239.
 6. William Martyn, the non-resident rector of Linwood, may have been acting with similar motives to the simoniacs when he lived his life as a '*communis mercator in granis et aliis animalibus*' (Court book, p 70; *Eng. Clergy*, p 231).
 7. Court book, pp 99-102; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 222-6. For the illegality of clerical marriage, see *Provinciale*, pp 124-8.

William White. In fact, Nowers, whose convoluted defence involved denying that he had ever been ordained, looks less like a heretic than a clerk who had regretted his vows of chastity and was now trying to escape retribution from the ecclesiastical authorities.¹

One group of accusations related to those clergy who showed disrespect to those placed in authority over them. The rector and chaplain of Aston Clinton made a grave error when they neglected to ring the church bells in honour of Bishop Alnwick's solemn procession through their parish.² William Alnwick, perhaps like many who had reached high authority from obscure beginnings, was not a man with whom it was safe to ignore protocol.³ The folly of attempting to usurp his or his ministers' jurisdiction was, no doubt, discovered by Thomas Hanley, rector of St Michael Major, Stamford, who forged a mandate sealed with the seal of one of the bishop's ministers.⁴

Those disobeying or ignoring direct commands from the bishop, his courts and officials, were unlikely to escape unprosecuted. These included even such powerful functionaries as Master 'J.A.', official of the archdeacon of Lincoln, who was summoned before the bishop to explain why he had not published an ecclesiastical constitution.⁵ Similarly, in 1448, the dean of Grimsby, who had failed to bring suspects before the bishop's court, was called to account.⁶ Four rectors and two vicars were accused of ignoring the sentences of episcopal courts.⁷ For example, William Wraby, vicar of Brampton, was accused of allowing an excommunicate priest to participate in divine service.⁸ Perhaps it was a similar

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1. It is, incidentally, almost the only surviving source for the procedure and dates of any of Alnwick's Lincoln ordinations (see Appendix V, p 397).
 2. Linc. Reg., f. 30v (no date).
 3. Cf. the dispute with Binham priory, below, p 248-52.
 4. Court book, p 46. The entry is incomplete. The minister was 'Master Robert', perhaps Thornton, the bishop's official.
 5. Linc. Reg., f 41 (no date).
 6. Court book, p 53.
 7. Court book, pp 8, 27, 28, 33, 105; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 234, 236, 237, 232.
 8. Court book, p 8; *Eng. Clergy*, p 234.

disregard of ecclesiastical authority which brought on charges of the maladministration of wills against a number of clerks. However, it does seem in several cases as if both sides, offenders and courts, were acting imprudently and hastily rather than maliciously.¹

Just as the beneficed clergy owed obedience to the bishop and his ministers, so were they in their turn in authority over the parish chaplains who assisted, and sometimes replaced, them in their spiritual ministry. According to canon law, it was important that a parish chaplain should show respect for his superior, the incumbent, and should promote peace between the latter and his parishioners.² One parish chaplain, Richard Hervy, was accused of constant disobedience to his curate.³ John Stanle of Watton went further. He not only defamed John Roger, his rector, calling him a 'false priest', and causing discord between him and his parishioners, but also attacked him in the chancel of the church '*et nisi fuisset impeditus per Johannem Turner et alios occidisset eundem cum cuttello*'.⁴

Not only parish chaplains behaved in this way. Three vicars were accused of violence, with varying disciplinary results. Henry Langham, vicar of Great Gaddesden, who had attacked another priest, was perhaps forced to resign his benefice.⁵ Walter Bud, vicar of North Marston, who had attacked not only William Lyncroft, priest, but also the official of the archdeacon of Buckingham, was

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1. Court book, pp 8, 29, 45, 82. One case in particular would seem to bear out this argument. Thomas Bevill, rector of Coppingford, and Richard Knot, rector of Walton, executors of Thomas My, late rector of Abbots Hemingford, were brought before the bishop on 21 November 1447. They claimed to be executing the will on the authority of its probate by the abbot of Sawtry. The bishop warned them peremptorily not to administer the goods on the abbot's authority. To make his point, he sequestered the goods from them before returning them to them for administration (*ibid.*, p 21). See also below, pp *.
 2. *Provinciale*, pp 69-72; see also Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 25-6; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 122-3
 3. Court book, p 84.
 4. *Ibid.*, p 35.
 5. *Ibid.*, p 33. For an analysis of the known results of cases, see Table VI.

sentenced to public penance (seemingly without fustigation) in 1448.¹ By contrast, the fine of 10d payable to the cathedral fabric owed by Robert Northon, vicar of Ulceby, for violence done to another vicar seems comparatively lenient. Perhaps his vow to go to Rome was taken into account.²

Four clerks were accused of theft. William Lyncroft may have been avenging his beating when he took some wax candles from the church of Marston and carried them to another vicarage.³ Richard Hervy had stolen a chalice from the church he served and compounded his crime by laying the blame on his rector.⁴ However, the only priest whose treatment followed the normal course for the 'criminous clerk' was William Drury, parish chaplain of Colmworth, Bedfordshire who '*vi et armis scilicet gladiis et dagariis*' had broken into the church on 28 May 1440 and stolen two silver chalices, one gold cup, a censer, a spoon, a white fustion chasuble, one torch, two 'corporaxes' and other goods to the value of £100.⁵ The arrangements made for his purgation, nearly seven years after his incarceration for the crime, were in accordance with the agreed procedure between royal and ecclesiastical justice, and are hardly indicative of 'an empty form favourable to the accused'.⁶

The most frequently cited clerical crimes were sexual. In all, forty-four clergymen were accused of sexual incontinence of some kind or other with fifty-seven women, including two nuns. The liaisons of twenty-five of these men were adulterous. John How, rector of Letchworth, Edmund, rector of Holwell, and Thomas, vicar of Pirton cum Ickleford, were all accused of adultery with the same

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1. Court book, p 99; *Eng. Clergy*, p 238. Bud[del] is correct, not Bird as Thompson has it.
 2. Court book, pp 49, 64; unfortunately neither entry is dated.
 3. Court book, p 104; *Eng. Clergy*, p 238.
 4. Court book, p 84.
 5. Linc. Reg., f 71.
 6. L.C. Gabel, *Benefit of Clergy in England in the Later Middle Ages* (U.S.A., 1929), p 113. Although this book is useful, a more judicious discussion of criminous clerks is to be found in Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 119-35.

woman, Joanna, wife of John Pegge of Ickleford.¹ Many cases were classified as spiritual incest, in that the relationship was with a parishioner. Only nineteen of the accused clergy were accused of incontinence with unmarried women (and one of these was a nun), so it does not seem as if one can excuse a very large proportion as stable concubinage. Eight men were accused of incontinence with more than one woman: six with two; John Bower, vicar of Sleford with three;² and Robert Talbot, rector of Croxton, with five.³

Talbot's appalling case is recorded in what looks like a presentment document. He had been caught in *flagrante delicto* during Lent with one woman, and was accused of habitual fornication during Lent with another. He had refused to absolve Isabella Mason of her sins unless she succumbed to his advances, and when the same argument failed with his parishioner Agnes Dryffeld he had carried her off to the vestry where her cries for help had been heard by many.⁴ His relationship with Alice Hove seems to have been of a more permanent nature. With her he had produced two children, one of whom he had baptised. The seriousness with which his offences were regarded was illustrated by the large number of witnesses (nine named plus '*multis aliis*'), including the abbot of Thornton, who were prepared to testify against Talbot. It is to be doubted whether allowing clerical marriage would have prevented his misdeeds.⁵

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1. Court book, f 3. Eventually all were purged of the alleged crime.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 66-7; Court book, p 60. Two of these relationships were adulterous and the third produced offspring.
 3. Court book, p 65, plus a loose page that was found between pages 64 and 65; this latter looks as if it may be the original bill of presentment - it is undated. Unfortunately Talbot's punishment is unknown.
 4. It is not recorded whether they rescued her! His case is a vivid illustration of the need for the care with which priests were instructed to proceed in administering confession to their female parishioners (*Provinciale*, p 342).
 5. Cf. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 104-8.

Nevertheless, the evidence against an obviously wicked man such as Talbot should not lead to the assumption that all those accused were guilty of incontinence. In only nine of the forty-four cases was guilt established. The results of eighteen cases were not recorded, and almost as many men managed to purge themselves. Nor should it be assumed that in so doing they committed perjury.¹ Some support for the innocence of a proportion of these men may be gained from the fact that only eight children were supposed to have been born from these numerous liaisons, two of them to Robert Talbot.

Sexual incontinence, although the most frequently reported, was not the only sin of the flesh. Three rectors and a vicar were accused of excessive drinking.² John Northgate, rector of Caldecote, who was allowed to purge himself of spiritual incest (much, it would seem, against the instincts of his judge, John Derby) also denied drunkenness. Among others accused was Robert David, vicar of Grimsby St James. In 1448, he purged himself of the charge that '*exercet communes tabernas usque mediam noctem, per quem inebriatur*'. However, his judge may not have been too sure of his innocence; on his dismissal he was enjoined not to frequent taverns '*extra casum necessitatis sub pena iuris*'.³

Such priests might be expected to offend during periods of canonical fasting and abstinence. In fact, the only clerk so accused was Robert Alcock, the priest '*mente alienatus*'.⁴ He was also accused of not having received the sacraments of penance and

1. Cf. Gabel, *Benefit of Clergy*, p 104. Although one has doubts about Robert Walpole, vicar of Burnham (Court book, pp 87,89). He and his parishioner Elena Symmes managed to purge themselves of adultery early in 1446. Later in the same year he was accused of spiritual incest with a nun of Burnham convent. They purged themselves of this crime but admitted sacrilegious activities with a consecrated host which caused the bishop's commissary John Derby to impose the relatively severe fine of solemn penance plus 20s to be paid in the cathedral, along with offerings of candles, to be rendered at the next three feasts of Corpus Christi.

2. Court book, pp 2, 48, 71; *Eng. Clergy*, p 231.

3. Court book, p 51; *Eng. Clergy*, p 230.

4. Court book, p 46; *Eng. Clergy*, p 230.

the eucharist. Alcock's excuse could not have been offered for William Sandebach, rector of Maids Moreton, who, apparently, continued to say mass every day although he had not been confessed by another priest for seven years.¹ Sandebach's actions may well have been considered blasphemous. The blasphemy of which Walter Bud was accused was, apparently, that he had dug up the head of a dead man, put three drops of blood on it, and alleged that it was the head of a local saint, John Shorn.² Such activities, like those of a canon of Stonely Priory and the rector of Barkston, who were accused of using sorcery in attempts to find stolen goods,³ were crimes that few were accused of. Although serious and needing to be dealt with, they cannot have taken up a great deal of the time and thought that was expended by Bishop Alnwick and his commissaries in their disciplinary activities against the faults of his diocesan clergy.

It should not be considered that because, in the main, sources for Alnwick's disciplinary activities in the diocese of Norwich are not extant, he and his ministers were less concerned about the misdeeds of the clergy there. Scattered through the Norwich institution lists are notes of the removal from their benefices of twelve rectors and two vicars.⁴ Similarly, his Lincoln register records the deprivation of two rectors and two vicars and activities against one rector and one clerk, whose crimes are not recorded either in the register or in the court book.⁵ It would seem that the cases recorded against the clergy in Alnwick's Lincoln court book were merely the (large) tip of the iceberg of clerical misdemeanours with which he and his assistants had to deal during his episcopal career.⁶ Nevertheless, even if the real

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1. Court book p 105; *Eng. Clergy*, p 232.
 2. Court book, p 99; *Eng. Clergy*, p 238. Bud purged himself.
 3. Court book, pp 26, 80; *Eng. Clergy*, p 222.
 4. Norw. Reg., ff 14v, 38, 42v, 45v-6, 46v, 51, 51v, 69v, 71, 75v, 76v, 86, 86v.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 35, 36, 74v, 90v, 102, 119v, 129.
 6. Some indication of the amount of disciplinary business being dealt with by the commissaries general is given by the account roll of John Wardale (LAO BP Accounts 5), which records under '*de denariis pro correctionibus*' five rectors, one vicar, two chaplains and the master of (continued on next page)

numbers of those whose possible offences brought them to the attention of the ecclesiastical authorities was considerably greater than those for whom we have records, they would still form a relatively small proportion of the whole body of the clergy. It would be unduly cynical to assume that the clergy who were not disciplined (90% on a conservative estimate) were simply managing to conceal their crimes from the authorities. Those who obey the rules are rarely noticed.

The clergy owed Bishop Alnwick obedience in all things, while the obedience due to him from the laity (those who were not also his temporal subjects) was in the spiritual sphere. It was thus those people who offended against moral and canon law, or ecclesiastical individuals and bodies, who came before the bishop's courts.

As with the clergy, a number of lay people were summoned to answer for crimes that were not recorded.¹ However, those whose contumacies led the bishop to signify their excommunication to the king were perhaps suspected of serious offences.² The case of John Kyng alias Barker of Baldock is of particular interest.³ Because of his '*multiplicitas et excrescentes contumacias*' before John Leek, Alnwick's commissary general in Hertfordshire, he had incurred major excommunication which had endured for more than forty days. The resultant writ *de excommunicato capiendo* had been directed to the sheriff of Hertfordshire, John Mallyng. He, according to Alnwick, was negligent and made no effort to capture the miscreant, thus himself incurring the sentence of excommunication. The last surviving notice of this case is a letter of 1446 from Alnwick to Robert, bishop of London, asking him to cite Mallyng before Alnwick's episcopal court. The question of

(ctd) St Leonard's hospital Leicester in 1439-40; three vicars in 1440-1; two rectors and two vicars in 1441-2 and one rector, one vicar and three chaplains in 1442-3.

1. For example, Court book, pp 31, 38.
2. PRO: C 85/137/36-41 (Norwich); C 85/112/1-43 (Lincoln). For the figures, see Table IV.
3. C 85/112/27; Linc. Reg., f 68; Court book, p 7.

whether or not bishops had the authority to act against royal officials who failed to assist them was a contentious one.¹ Throughout his career, Bishop Alnwick was to demonstrate that he was not afraid of confrontation.

Fortunately such tantalising references are few. It is possible from the surviving sources to receive a good idea of the kind of crimes which brought the laity before Alnwick and his commissaries, and an impression of how the court dealt with offenders.² As a large number of the dispensations granted to the laity were concerned with avoiding impediments to marriage, so a proportion of their offences were related to it. The case which provided the longest record from either of Alnwick's episcopates concerned two of the foremost gentry families of the Norwich diocese.³ On 2 October 1436, Bishop Alnwick commissioned his two leading assistants John Wygenhale, his vicar general, and William Bernham, the official principal, to inquire into the case of the marriage of Sir Thomas Tuddenham and his wife Alice, the daughter of John Wodehouse esquire. He had heard that, after several years of marriage which had produced offspring, Alice had abandoned her husband and entered Crabhouse Augustinian nunnery. As Tuddenham was not known to have taken a similar vow of chastity he feared for his moral welfare. In a series of hearings which lasted for the rest of the year, the commissaries, with the assistance of such witnesses as the abbot of West Dereham and the prioress of Crabhouse as well as lay people who had known the couple during their married life, established the truth of the business. It was proved to their satisfaction that, although Alice and Thomas had lived together for several years, the marriage had never been consummated, and that the one child she had borne had been the result of a short liaison with her father's chamberlain. The marriage was therefore declared null: she was free to enter the

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1. *Provinciale*, pp 260-4, 349-50; Logan, *Excommunication and the Secular Arm*, pp 102-5; Heath, *Church and Realm*, pp 27-31.
 2. See Tables VII and VIII for some analysis of the figures.
 3. The record appears in the register of his successor, Thomas Brouns (NRO: REG. 5/10, ff 113-21).

nunnery and Tuddenham to re-marry.¹ Cynics might suggest that this was an elaborate fiction to enable two powerful people to change the course of their lives. It may be so. Nevertheless, the bishop's original commission, '*ex officio mero*', and the thoroughness of investigations would seem to point in the opposite direction.

William Alnwick's Lincoln court of audience considered a number of cases concerning uncanonical marriage,² but perhaps the most extraordinary matrimonial case to come before the bishop's court was that of Thomas Jesop of Woolsthorpe.³ He was accused of having fornicated with Isabella Grove to whom, it was said, he was betrothed. When this liaison produced a child, he had cunningly acted as godfather, thus creating an impediment of spiritual affinity so that he could avoid marrying her.⁴ The most concrete and indispensable impediment to a marriage was, of course, a living spouse. As many as five people were accused of bigamy. Three were suspected of marrying women whose husbands still lived;⁵ and it was said that Richard Wylburgham, recently of Nottinghamshire, now of Gaddesden, '*habet iij uxores*'. William Rokesworth of Stamford had a wife in London but was planning to marry Katherine Braytoft, a resident of Lincoln. He claimed that his first marriage was invalid as his wife, Alice, had herself already been married. John Derby wisely ordered him not to proceed with his second marriage before he had produced some proof of his story.⁶

Bigamy was, of course, just one form of adultery. Altogether thirty-seven men and ten women (not including the supposed partners

1. He does not seem to have done so.

2. Court book, pp 12, 46.

3. Court book, p 82.

4. Jesop, like many since time immemorial, denied the betrothal and claimed not to know whether he or another was the father. It seems monstrously unfair that he was able to purge himself while Isabella, who confessed, was sentenced by Balscot to three fustigations.

5. Court book, pp 62, 77, 89.

6. *Ibid.*, p 94.

in each case) were suspected of adultery of one kind or another. Two men seem to have endangered the life of their wife. Ralph Herper of Grantham was reported to have slept with Joan Dennis while his wife lay in the chamber below in fear of death.¹ In 1446, it was reported that Thomas Bakon of Bengeo had tried to persuade his mistress, his married servant Anabella Thome, to help him kill his wife Petronella and then live with him. Anabella had, presumably, thought better of the plot and, warning Petronella of the danger, had escaped with her own husband.² Walter Houton of Wickford was reputed to have committed incest with his sister-in-law at the connivance of his brother, her husband.³ Several relationships were between people related by some spiritual affinity, thus making their crime also one of incest as well as adultery.⁴ One man⁵ and one woman were accused of adultery with members of religious orders, Elizabeth Taylor being accused with a Dominican friar, Brother William Welby of the Lincoln convent, '*presertim subtus le trusstak apud Malkyson both' Lincoln'*' on the Friday after the feast of Corpus Christi.⁶

Similarly, two of the four unmarried women accused of fornication had offended with men in religious orders, including two monks of Bardney Abbey.⁷ Eleven men were accused of fornication. It thus seems, as with the clergy so with the laity, that adultery was a more commonly cited crime than fornication. Why this should be is uncertain. It may simply reflect the large number of marriages at a young age, common, certainly amongst the nobility, in the later middle ages. Perhaps it is more likely that fornication was not seen as such an unforgiveable crime as adultery and was thus less likely to be reported to the church authorities.

1. Elizabeth, wife of Sir John Heynes and John Heynes and William Heynes of Barton, Lincolnshire. *Journal of the American Society of Genealogists*, vol. 1, pp. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 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999, 1000.

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1. Court book, p 68. His wife was thus probably his accuser.
 2. *Ibid.*, p 39. It is surprising to find a note to the effect that Thomas and Petronella were reunited.
 3. *Ibid.*, p 41.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp 79, 106.
 5. *Ibid.*, p 26.
 6. *Ibid.*, p 46.
 7. *Ibid.*, p 47; Cf. *Visitations* II, p 11.

The sixty or so lay people who were thus accused of sexual crimes (including the wife of a knight and two squires)¹ were, apparently, assisted in their misdemeanours by seven bawds or panders, including Thomas Birkwood of Boston, who was accused of allowing John Birkwood (?his brother), vicar of Butterwick, and Matilda Thamworth to meet in his house.² Robert and Agnes Wynluf of Manthorpe were accused of acting as bawds between Dominus John Bell and Robert Hykam.³

As with the clergy, it should not necessarily be assumed that all those accused of incontinence were guilty. Half the cases have not left records of verdicts, about one-quarter of the accused were allowed to purge themselves, and only about one-fifth of the cases were proved. Again, like the clergy, the mention of very few children produced from these illicit relationships would seem to argue against assuming the truth of all accusations. Only Thomas Jessop and John Knevet esquire were recorded as having such children.⁴

Canon law provided parents with some guidance on protecting their children.⁵ Three couples of the Lincoln diocese were accused of endangering their children's lives.⁶ Similarly, Elena Clerk of Hamerton was suspected (and purged herself) '*de oppressione infantis*'. John and Joanna Clerk of Legsby confessed to abandoning a two-year old child.⁷ One of the most interesting cases looks remarkably like a suspected case of surrogate motherhood. Elizabeth the wife of Thomas Vynter of Ickleford, Hertfordshire,

1. Elizabeth, wife of Sir John Pygot and John Knevet and William Cranwell of Hamerton esquires (Court book, pp 62-3, 12, 60).

2. *Ibid.*, p 58.

3. *Sic*. Nothing beyond this accusation is known of this case (*ibid.*, p 73).

4. *Ibid.*, pp 12, 82.

5. *Provinciale*, pp 244, 307.

6. Court book, pp 13, 18 ('*Johannes Broune et eius uxor demiserunt infantem duorum annorum pereclitari in aqua*'); 19 (John Laurence '*et uxor sua pereclitaverunt et oppresserunt puerum suum*'), 31 (John Holyngton and his wife '*notantur super pereclitacione infantis per modum submersionis in puteo*').

7. *Ibid.*, p 69.

was accused of feigning both pregnancy and labour '*et postea in sacramentalium ecclesie derisionem se iuxta ritum ecclesie purificari temere fecit et procuravit*'. Elizabeth Hougham, her servant, moreover, was accused of not having presented herself for purification after childbirth.¹

This suspected contempt of sacramentals² was, perhaps, bordering on the blasphemous. Only one man, John Cawe of Hamerton, was actually accused of this crime, as he was accustomed to swear by the parts of God's body.³ Those who dabbled with the spirit world were treading on much more dangerous ground. Alice, wife of John Paythorn of Wragby, who asserted that the vicar's spirit walked after his death, was probably merely superstitious.⁴ There does, however, appear to have been a real belief in the efficacy of spells of one kind or another. Altogether six lay men and four women were accused of some kind of sorcery. Two men, Thomas Staynfeld of Bolingbroke and John Dixon, cook of Stonely Priory, used spells in an attempt to find stolen goods. Agnes Portose of Huntingdon seems to have used people's measurements to tell their fortune.⁵ It is not exactly clear what Thomas Poldych alias Holdych of Sutton in Holland actually did. Clearly, from the vigour with which Alnwick pursued him (c. 1442), he was considered a particularly evil specimen.⁶ John Dixon's use of a psalter in his divination was highly suspect, and the use of consecrated hosts by Joanna Fyssh of Maltby was plainly sacrilegious.⁷

Sacrilege of a different kind was the crime of those who disrupted church services. William Stokley of Lincoln had

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1. *Ibid.*, p 28. No date.
 2. For accusations of disregard of the sacraments themselves, see below, pp 204-5.
 3. Court book, p 24; *Eng. Clergy*, p 229. As he managed to purge himself with Master John Elvedon, one of Alnwick's minor assistants, it looks as if he was less guilty of this crime than a victim of the feuding that seems to have been going on within Hamerton.
 4. Court book, p 81.
 5. Court book, pp 95, 26; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 221, 222.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 41v-42, 76. See also *LCS*, vol. III, pp 496-500.
 7. Court book, pp 26, 94; *Eng. Clergy*, p 222

apparently created a disturbance during a service in the cathedral on Sunday 29 October 1447 '*in divine maiestatis offensum...animeque sue grave periculum*'.¹ Two people were cited for acts of violence in churches, one of whom, Agnes Hykham of Hatfield Episcopi, had apparently attacked her neighbour, Alice Taylor, and dragged her round the church by her hair.² In addition, in 1442, Alnwick commissioned Walter Sandwich, his commissary general in Oxford and Buckingham, to investigate a report of violence done in the parish church of Great Harwood.³

If some people dared to commit violence in the churches themselves, even more were guilty of it in the churchyards surrounding them. In 1447, John Sutton reported to the bishop on the pollution of the cemetery of Rand church. Three parishioners had, by order of Robert Tupplyn, a local rector, killed one Durand Curteys.⁴ Ten parishioners of South Kelsey were brought before Thomas Balscot in 1448 for fighting in the parish cemetery.⁵ The violence committed by Robert Ponell, constable of Stickney, may be an early example of police brutality. He had put Thomas Dyker, who claimed he had been acting perfectly legally, in the stocks with such violence that he had caused Dyker's legs to bleed.⁶

Violence was not the only crime witnessed in the churchyards. Several people were accused of cutting down trees without the curate's permission. This violated the canonical rules which protected church property.⁷ William Hewitt of Great Gaddesden had allowed his animals to invade the cemetery, thus bringing the wrath of the ecclesiastical authorities down on his vicar.⁸ The

1. Linc. Reg., f 72; LCS, vol. III, pp 533-4. The dean of Christianity and all parish priests of the deanery were commissioned to cite Stokley to appear before the bishop (Alnwick had been at Buckden at the time of the disturbance).

2. Court book, pp 23, 79.

3. Linc. Reg., f 43.

4. *Ibid.*, ff 68v-69.

5. Court book, p 50.

6. *Ibid.*, p 43.

7. *Ibid.*, pp 3, 25 (cf. *Provinciale*, pp 85-90).

8. Court book, p 33.

incumbent was not the only person responsible for the upkeep of ecclesiastical property. In 1448, the churchwardens of Rippingale were accused of neglecting the fencing of the cemetery with the result that it had been invaded 'like a profane place' by grazing animals.¹ The excuse they gave rings true. By the end of their three years in office they had collected enough money from their fellow parishioners to provide the necessary fencing, but because it happened to be the time of the grain and vine harvest, the necessary labour had not been available. Bishop Alnwick himself had noted, while on his ordinary visitation, the dilapidation of the nave of the parish church of Knaptoft. He subsequently commissioned his Leicester commissary general to admonish the parishioners to do the necessary repair work.²

Some of the laymen accused of occupying and administering the fruits of their parish churches without the proper authority may, in fact, have been assisting the incumbents in the management of their temporalities.³ However, the amount of material alienated by Richard Jeffrey of Great Gaddesden from the rectory during the last vacancy of the benefice rules out the possibility that he was acting as caretaker during the vacancy.⁴ Similarly, Richard Lawe of Stony Stratford had acted against the wishes of the rector of Calverton when he had taken over church lands, including parts of the rectory and its gardens, thus incurring the automatic sentence of major excommunication.⁵

Three men were accused of outright theft. They had endured seven years imprisonment in the bishop's prison at Banbury, after their trial by the royal courts, before commissions were ordered

1. *Ibid.*, p 49 (Reepham?).

2. Linc. Reg., ff 43v. This was probably in 1442, see below, pp 213-4.

3. Court book, pp 46, 47, 95; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 219-220.

4. Court book, p 33. He had disposed of candles, keys, tables, forms, stools, trees, and dung carts.

5. *Ibid.*, p 88.

for their purgation.¹ On the night of 4 April 1435, they had broken into the parish church of Kingsthorpe, Northamptonshire, and stolen books, vestments and a chalice to the value of £40.

Not only the church's property but also her ministers suffered. There were seventeen reported attacks on parochial clergy. In three cases the defendants were able to purge themselves of guilt.² The memorandum of the case against Thomas Edenham of Huntingdon, who was accused of bloody violence against Robert Selby, priest, recorded '*iste articulus est falsus*'.³ Two of the accused, Edmund Wright of Water Newton, who had wounded George Lyndesey priest, and Thomas Chapman of Weston by Baldock, who had gravely wounded Master John Bagot with his sword, claimed self-defence.⁴ In the other cases, there were no such excuses. Two of the local gentry used their retainers to attack their incumbent. In 1446, servants of John Knevet esquire twice assaulted John Marshall, the unsatisfactory vicar of Hamerton.⁵ Two years later, Sir John Pygot of Doddington was accused not only of withholding tithes from William Dighton, his rector, but also of setting his servants on him, and holding him prisoner without food.⁶ The most shocking case was that against Richard and Joanna Elger of Brampton.⁷ A priest called William Orgill had been sleeping as a guest in their house. With the assistance of John Bosgate and other accomplices, and of Joanna who had bound the priest's legs and arms, Elger had castrated him. Bishop Alnwick's puzzlement is patent. He asked Elger the obvious question of whether '*invenit eum turpiter agendo*

1. Linc. Reg., ff 39v, 42v. The men were William Frost Skryvenor alias Beverlay, late of Beverley, Yorks., bookbinder; William Surbower and Robert Goldsmith. These men appear to have been examples of the literate laity who were to give benefit of clergy such a bad name (cf. Gabel, *Benefit of Clergy*, pp 62-91). Cf. above, p 184.

2. Court book, pp 49, 51, 109; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 212-3.

3. Court book, p 13.

4. *Ibid.*, pp 40, 36; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 218-9.

5. Court book, p 4; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 55, 206-8.

6. Court book, p 52; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 213-5.

7. Court book, pp 17-18; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 216-8 (1447).

cum uxore sua or *'hoc fecit ad extorquendam pecuniam ab ipso'*? Elger could only reply that he had acted *'solum ex instigatione diabolica'*.

Even Alnwick's own officials suffered at the hands of his subjects. Twelve Hertfordshire men were called before him in 1446 for attacking his apparitor general in the Hitchin deanery. Knowing him to have been commissioned to cite three men (including John Samme, one of their number) for correction before the bishop, they had set upon him, finally forcing him to eat the bishop's letters. They also attacked Master John Elveden, while he was attempting to cite William Raven, another one of the group.¹ John Hykham of Hatfield similarly frightened the bishop's commissary, John Butterwick, so much that he was unable to proceed against Hykham's wife.² The methods of John Wylkyn of Eagle and Thomas Grene and John Marton of Wickford were more subtle. They simply locked the doors and hid the keys of their church so that the bishop's commissaries were unable to start proceedings.³ William Bright of Sawtry, an adulterer, exhibited similar contempt for Alnwick's authority by asserting *'publice....quod non vult corrigi per episcopum, commissarios, officialem seu quoscumque alios'*.⁴

Those, like John Mallyng,⁵ who incurred Alnwick's displeasure by neglecting his instructions were in marked contrast to those who actually usurped his authority. John Wylkynson of Houghton was not only an adulterer but also extracted forty shillings *'nomine correccionis'* from Dominus William *'nuper de Parva Lafford'* for his incontinence.⁶ In 1446, David Geffrune of Wragby admitted physically attacking the vicar Robert Hill but denied usurping the bishop's jurisdiction by fining him *'grossam summam pecunie'* for spiritual incest. Perhaps he guessed that Alnwick was a man who might understand violence in a moment of righteous indignation but

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1. Court book, pp 5-6; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 208-12.
 2. Court book, p 23.
 3. *Ibid.*, pp 61, 95; *Eng. Clergy*, p 216 (Wylkyn).
 4. Court book, p 30.
 5. See above, pp 188-9.
 6. Court book, p 94.

would never brook the usurpation of his own jurisdiction.¹

This determination to protect the bishop's jurisdiction is illustrated by the thirteen cases relating to probate which came before the court. Seven people were accused of administering the goods of the dead without proper authority. In two of these cases, the accused were able to show that they were named executors in properly proved wills.² This may have been also the situation in the cases where the outcome is not known. The court's over-enthusiasm in this matter is illustrated by the case of William Basley of Hatfield.³ As executor of his father, he was called before the court to exhibit the will. Not appearing on 26 February 1448, he was suspended by John Derby. On 15 March, when he had still not appeared, he was denounced and excommunicated by Thomas Balscot. Later, on the bishop's mandate, he was absolved by Derby, as he had been found to be '*mortuum et sepultum in cimiterio ecclesie de Hatfield*'.

The enormous importance of the integrity of the bishop's jurisdiction is clear. It is unfortunate that the outcome of the case against Robert Glover and Henry Drewell of Abbot's Hemingford has not survived.⁴ In 1447, they were accused of forging the bishop's seal and using it to seal episcopal letters, which they then used to extort money '*racione feodi*'. In the secular sphere, the forgery of the king's seal was seen as treason. It is doubtful that Bishop Alnwick regarded this crime as much less pernicious.

The majority of those recorded as coming before Bishop Alnwick or his commissaries in the diocese of Lincoln had committed an offence against, at most, a handful of people and one or two church laws, and in doing so had endangered their own souls. Those who accepted and promulgated heretical beliefs were a more serious problem. They endangered not only their own souls but also those

1. *Ibid.*, p 96.

2. *Ibid.*, pp 25, 46; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 219-220.

3. Court book, p 25.

4. *Ibid.*, p 22; *Eng. Clergy*, p 244.

of all with whom they came into contact, and finally the very existence of the church which Jesus Christ had established to continue His mission. Where heresy appeared, it was essential for the church authorities to stamp it out.' No bishop, whether conscientious as Alnwick appears to have been or not, could afford to tolerate or ignore this crime, which was regarded as so serious that nobody below the rank of a bishop, or his specially commissioned assistants, was permitted to act.

The statute *de heretico comburendo* of 1401, an act of parliament of 1414 and the 'Lollard constitution' promulgated by the convocation of the Canterbury province in 1416, provided the legal framework on which any episcopal activities against heretics were based. Through them, the bishop's obligation to seek out, investigate and deal with any cases of heresy within his diocese was supplemented by the duty of the secular authorities to assist him by arresting and, if necessary, executing convicted relapsed heretics.²

There is no evidence to suggest that William Alnwick was greatly concerned with Lollardy before his elevation to the episcopate. He originated from the Durham diocese, not one particularly noted for heresy, and he was educated at Cambridge, which had none of Oxford's Wycliffite traditions. His first encounters with Lollardy and Lollards would therefore probably have been in convocation. From December 1420, when he became archdeacon of Salisbury,³ Alnwick was bound to attend the Canterbury convocation. His absence in France throughout 1422 meant that he could not have attended the convocation of July 1422, which witnessed the abjuration of William White, chaplain of Tenterden, Kent.⁴ This man was subsequently to become the most important

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1. See *Provinciale*, pp 282-302 for fifteenth-century ecclesiastical measures against heresy.
 2. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 15, 24-5; *Statutes of the Realm*, vol. II (Record Commission, 1816), pp 181-4; *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 10-15, 18-19.
 3. *CPL*, vol. VII, p 233.
 4. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 85.

source of heresy in the diocese of Norwich.¹

Whether or not William Alnwick took any part in the consideration of heresy which occurred both in the parliaments and convocations of the early 1420's,² his provision to the see of Norwich in 1426 ensured that he would have to tackle the problem. In 1428 the general concern about Lollardy came to something of a head.³ In the spring and early summer Archbishop Chichele was acting against suspected Lollards in his diocese and was attempting to arrest, among others, William White '*nuper capellanus parochialem de Tenterdene*'.⁴ The records of the convocations of July, November-December 1428 and October to December 1429, which Alnwick attended, reveal the deep concern felt by Chichele and his fellow bishops.⁵ On 14 July 1428, Thomas Brouns, the archbishop's chancellor (and Alnwick's successor at Norwich) produced and read '*quemdam tractatus de modo procedendi contra hereticis ac etiam quandam formam abjuracionis errorum et heresum*'.⁶ At the prorogation of the first session, Chichele asked all his suffragans to inquire into heresy in their dioceses and report their findings and actions to him.⁷ In the second session, a sub-committee of the bishops of Ely, Bath, Worcester and Rochester was established to draw up a written form of procedure.⁸ This never appears again in

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1. See M. Aston, 'William White's Lollard Followers', *Lollards and Reformers*, pp 71-100.
 2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 88-117; *RP*, vol. IV, pp 290-3, 295-6, 305-6.
 3. This was the year in which Wyclif's bones were exhumed and burnt by Bishop Fleming of Lincoln in response to Martin V's mandate of December 1427 (*CPL*, vol. VII, p 23). It also saw Cardinal Beaufort's appointment as legate *a latere* to rid Germany of the Hussites (*ibid.*, pp 30-1).
 4. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, p cxxxvii; vol. IV, pp 297-301.
 5. *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp 182-212.
 6. *Ibid.*, p 187.
 7. *Ibid.*, p 190. It is possible that it was as a result of this request that the proceedings in Alnwick's court of audience were recorded and have survived via the archives of the archbishop of Canterbury and the cardinal archbishop of Westminster. However, Dr N.P. Tanner, the editor of *Trials*, has expressed (*viva voce*) his doubts on this.
 8. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 191.

the records of convocation, but it does appear to have been copied for, and perhaps used by, at least some bishops.¹ The recommended procedure contained a list of questions concerning the belief of the heretic, the form of abjuration, and the procedure for relaxation to the secular arm. There is no evidence that Alnwick had a copy of this procedure and, by the time it was completed, his own proceedings were already well under way.²

William Alnwick's proceedings against heretics in the diocese of Norwich have been much discussed by historians, and this is not the place to rehearse either the beliefs of the heretics, or the proceedings against them, in great detail.³ William Sautre, the first heretic to be burned (1401), was also the last, from the Norwich diocese, to be prosecuted (as far as we know) before 1424,⁴ when several suspects came before Bishop Wakering and William Bernham, his chancellor.⁵ It would thus seem that heresy had reappeared in the Norwich diocese well before Alnwick's accession. This assumption is confirmed by the very large numbers of Lollards who came before the bishop during his proceedings, and their manifest links with the Lollards of Kent.

Clearly there had been activity against the heretics in the diocese of Norwich even before Chichele's appeal in July 1428. On 6 July, the day after the opening of convocation,⁶ royal letters were sent to John Exeter, the bishop's registrar, and Jacolet Germain, keeper of Colchester Castle, instructing them to apprehend 'William White, priest, and Thomas, late chaplain of Setling in the

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1. The evidence for this seems to have been noticed first by J.D. Fines 'Studies in the Lollard Heresy', pp 255-60. Subsequently, it has been discussed by Thomson, *Later Lollards*, pp 225-8, who acknowledged Fines' work; and by A. Hudson 'The Examination of Lollards', *BIHR*, vol. XLVI (1973), pp 145-59, who acknowledged Thomson but not Fines.
 2. If he did use a set procedure it was more likely to have been that promulgated by Brouns.
 3. See above, pp 12, for the most important contributions to this subject. Perhaps the latest of many major publications on Lollardy is A. Hudson, *The Premature Reformation*.
 4. Rightly, 'The Early Lollards', pp 362-5
 5. Foxe, vol. III, pp 584-5.
 6. *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp 586-7.

county of Norfolk' and William Northampton, priest, and all others, whatsoever they be, that are suspected of heresy or Lollardy, wheresoever they may be found within the liberties or without, and straightway, being so taken, to send them unto our next gaol or prison, until such time as we shall have taken other order for their delivery'. Between this date and March 1431, as the result, it would seem, of vigorous investigation carried out throughout the diocese,² something like eighty to 100 suspected heretics³ came before Bishop Alnwick or his vicar general, William Bernham.⁴ Three men were handed over to the secular arm and burnt. Their execution was recorded with delight by the St Alban's chronicle,⁵ and more prosaically in the Norwich City records: 'For two cart loads of wood bought in the market for burning William Qwyte, eretic, 4s 8d. To John Jekkes for the carriage of the wood from the city to Bishop's Gates for burning William⁶ Waddon and Hugh Pie, eretycs, by agreement made with the said John, 16d. To Master John Excestre for half a hundred fagottes bought from him for punishing the said lollards, 18d. To Edmund Snetysham for two logs to which the said eretics were bound, 6d.'⁷ They thus probably had the doubtful honour of being the first heretics to be burnt outside London. As far as is known, these three were both the first and last to be executed by Alnwick.

Dramatic as these events were, most suspects were permitted to abjure their heretical beliefs, and a total of fourteen (mostly

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1. Probably the Thomas Pert of Seething mentioned in a number of the proceedings (*Trials*, pp 64, 140, 146, 165, 176, 179).
 2. See below, pp 239-41, for the clash with the abbey of Bury St Edmunds which resulted from the bishop's determination to carry out his inquisition even in its exempt jurisdiction. The phrase 'within the liberties and without' in the above quoted commission is an interesting precursor to this dispute.
 3. Foxe's figure of 120 would seem to be a considerable over-estimation (vol. III, p 587).
 4. *Trials*, passim; Foxe, vol. III, pp 586-601; *FZ*, pp 417-32. For the chronology of these proceedings, see Appendix VI.
 5. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 29.
 6. *Recte* John. See *Trials*, p 45 n.45. Presumably, his trial, and that of Hugh Pie, took place at about the same time as William White's in September 1428 (*FZ*, pp 417-32) but no record survives.
 7. Hudson and Tingey, *Norwich City Records*, vol. II, p 66.

towards the end of the proceedings) were able to purge themselves of the accusations.¹ If heresy survived in the diocese to any great degree after 1431 (and it is unlikely that it was entirely eradicated) it was only as an underground movement. Any further experience William Alnwick may have had during his Norwich episcopate of dealing with heretics was probably, apart from the case of Jeanne d'Arc,² in convocation. However, after 1431, even convocation seems to have become less concerned with this danger, for although Lollards and their supporters were included among the offenders who were 'accursed' in the list drawn up in the convocation of 1434, they were, on this occasion, well down it, which would suggest that other offences against the church were now alarming the authorities more than Lollardy.³

Heresy would not appear to have been of enormous concern to William Alnwick in the diocese of Lincoln. The first case of suspected heresy he is known to have dealt with after his translation is that of Eleanor Cobham, wife of the duke of Gloucester. Although Foxe regarded her as a martyr, her trial cannot be equated with Alnwick's other heresy proceedings.⁴ The remains of Alnwick's court book and register contain very few cases of suspected heresy. The primary accusation against Thomas Holdych, accused '*de heresim sapientibus*', seems to have been one of sorcery. The men who rescued him by ambushing the bishop's commissaries, may have been the followers of a heretical leader, but this seems unlikely.⁵ Unfortunately this record is not dated,

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1. *Trials*, pp 38-40, 98-102, 191-3, 200-2, 210.
 2. See below, pp 303-4.
 3. So thinks Thomson (*Later Lollards*, p 224).
 4. Foxe, vol. III, pp 704-9. See below, pp 319-21.
 5. Linc Reg, ff 41v-42, 76-76v. The bishop's horror is thus recorded: '*Sed, quod horrendum dictu est et absurdum dum commissarii nostri huiusmodi auditu ipsum Thomam sic captum et arrestatum in via publica intervenientes versum nos ducerent, surrexerunt quidam quasi de insidiis Sathane satelletes, ecclesie ne dum degeneres, sed eciam dampnacionis eterne, quorum nomina et personas ignoramus, filii, et ipsum Thomam, sub custodia ecclesie existentem, de manibus dictorum commissariorum nostrorum violenter et furibunde abstulerunt abduxerunt et alienarunt, et sic detinent alienar[e], mortem istis commissariis nostris comminantes, sic que et alias dictum Thomam in huiusmodi divinacione, (ctd on next page)*

although it would seem from its position in the register to date from about 1442. However, the fact that the announcement of the excommunication of Holdych and those aiding and abetting him was to be made in Boston church suggests the possibility that three infirm sorcerers who were treated with relative clemency by John Derby in 1446¹ were the pathetic remnants of what had once been a coven flourishing in Boston under Holdych's leadership.

Suspicion of heresy proper seems to have been rare. Robert Long of Lilley denied that he '*tenet certas opiniones heresim sapientes*' and so John Derby declared that the case should be investigated.² Similarly, John Hore of Essendon was brought before Alnwick in 1447 '*super certis articulis et opinionibus heresis et errorum*', but denied holding them.³ He abjured the (unstated) heresies, but the fact that when Alnwick asked him if he had any enemies he named John Kendale, rector of Essendon, encourages the suspicion that the charge against him was malicious.

There were several cases of suspected contempt of the sacraments. For example, Thomas Cosyn alias Flesshever of Wainfleet was a sailor who spent the periods of Lent and Easter in Norfolk, and it was not known whether he had fulfilled his Easter duties. Consequently he was suspected of heresy.⁴ Cosyn was able to produce witnesses to prove that he had received the sacraments in Norfolk, and thus was innocent. A more likely heretic was Thomas Sarposton alias Johnson alias Taylour of Sausthorpe who was

(ctd) *sortilegio, et nigromancia ac heresi dampnat' faverunt, adheserunt, consiliati sunt et auxiliati, in universalis sancte matris ecclesie et Dei contumeliam, irrisionem, et dilusionem manifesta, nostrique iurisdictionis nostre episcopalis et ordinarie contemptum et vilipendium execranda aliorumque perniciosum exemplum et suarum periculum animarum sentenciam maioris excommunicationis antedictae dampnabiliter incurrendo*'. The documents against Holdych are published (not always accurately) in LCS, vol. III, pp 496-500.

1. See below, p 218.
2. Court book, p 3; *Eng. Clergy*, p 227.
3. Court book, p 20; *Eng. Clergy*, p 227-8.
4. Court book, p 41; *Eng. Clergy*, p 228.

accused not only of abstaining from all the sacraments but also of eating meat during periods of abstinence.¹ His case is particularly suspicious because Bishop Alnwick twice signified his major excommunication to the crown: in August 1442 for his contumacy in not appearing before the bishop and in February 1446 '*in non parendo certis monicionibus missibus et mandatis nostris*'.² In contrast, those, like Richard Billing of Thurning and William Selso of Mentmore, who failed to attend church on Sundays, look less like heretics and more like hardworking farmers who were grateful for the occasional rest in bed.³ Similarly, John Nowers, the married deacon, strikes one as an orthodox man who regretted his commitment to celibacy rather than a man with truly heretical tendencies.⁴

The most tantalising glimpse of William Alnwick's concern with the suppression of heresy at this time is the reference by Gascoigne⁵ to an Oxford secular priest who, accused to Henry VI '*de diversis et pessimis haeresibus*' and of eating meat every Friday, was handed over to Alnwick who imprisoned him at Wallingford. Having abjured his heresy before the bishop he became a monk at Abingdon, where he told the abbot the unlikely story that he had learned all his heresies from Bishop Pecock. Presumably, this event occurred at some time between Pecock's first sermon at St Paul's in 1447 and Alnwick's death in December 1449.

The surviving records thus indicate that Bishop Alnwick was not unduly concerned with heresy during his Lincoln episcopate. The best explanation for this is perhaps the quiescence of the Lollards after the proceedings of earlier bishops of Lincoln, most notably Bishop Buckingham and the reformed Wycliffite, Philip Repington. In addition, a reputation for firm dealing with heresy may have preceded William Alnwick from the diocese of Norwich, discouraging

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1. Court book, p 44; *Eng. Clergy*, p 228.
 2. PRO: C 85/112/13, 15.
 3. Court book, pp 19, 86; *Eng. Clergy*, p 229.
 4. Court book, p 99-102; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 222-6. See above, p 181.
 5. *Loci et Libro*, p 29.

any heretics from being too bold in public. Nevertheless, it should not be assumed that the dearth of evidence proves that heresy did not exist. The case of the Oxford clerk, noted above, would not be known if it were not for Gascoigne. Yet it is probable that if the records of the activities of Alnwick's court of audience had survived for the Oxford archdeaconry more information on the case might have come to light. Similarly, it should not be forgotten that the Lollardy which had been so prevalent in Leicestershire may not have been 'quiescent from Rippingdon to 1511/12'.¹ It may simply have disappeared along with the pages of Alnwick's court book relating to the Leicester archdeaconry.² All that can safely be stated is that there is little evidence for a continuation of the heresy problem in the diocese of Lincoln during Alnwick's episcopate, and every indication that the bishop and his commissaries acted firmly in any cases where heresy was suspected.

(ii) Procedure in 'Ex Officio' Cases

The records of *ex officio* cases held before Alnwick's courts give very few clues as to how they came to the bishop's attention. The vast majority of the Lincoln cases (221) give no indication at all of how they came before the court. In seventy-one cases, the defendant was 'notatur' of his crime, but it is difficult to judge what this actually meant in procedural terms. According to Bowker,³ about half of the cases coming to the court of audience in the period 1514-20 arose as a direct result of an episcopal visitation. This may well have been the case sixty years earlier but the indications are very meagre. The defects of the nave of Knaptoft parish church were discovered by the bishop in the course

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1. J. Crompton, 'Leicestershire Lollards', pp 11-44 in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, vol. XLIV (1968-9), p 33.
 2. This is, of course, equally true of the Oxford, Northampton, Bedford and Stow archdeaconries, also missing from the court book.
 3. *An Episcopal Court Book*, p xi.

his ordinary visitation.¹ Some of the lists of complaints (notably that against Robert Talbot) read like presentation documents. There are two references to a '*billa*' and one to a '*scedula*' of complaints.²

It is easy to forget that episcopal visitation encompassed the parishes as well as religious houses, and the existence of the records of Bishop Alnwick's monastic visitations make it doubly so. There is, however, no doubt that he undertook parochial visitation in both his dioceses. In the diocese of Norwich, his attempt to visit the town of Wymondham provoked opposition, leading to a case in the court of Arches;³ and visitations of the Leicester archdeaconry in 1440/1 and the Oxford archdeaconry in 1445 are also recorded.⁴ It seems at least possible that the notes of accusations in his Lincoln court book, arranged as they were by archdeaconry and deanery, were the results of presentments made during such visitations. It seems likely, too, that the Lollards who came before him in Norwich had been discovered as a result of a systematic visitation throughout the diocese, for which the record of his inquisition at Bury St Edmunds is the only surviving evidence.

B.L. Woodcock claimed that the great bulk of *ex officio* business coming before the Canterbury courts originated in the inquisition of apparitors.⁵ That there were such officials, in the Lincoln diocese at least, is clear but whether they were

1. Linc. Reg., f 43.

2. Court book, pp 33, 60, 65.

3. Kent Archives Office: DRb/0/10, ff 16-18, 31-2, 86-86v. (This is a formulary book which seems to have originated in the court of Arches. I am very grateful to Dr D.M. Owen for telling me of its existence). In 1448, the inhabitants of Wymondham were still opposing attempts by the bishop of Norwich (Walter Lyhart) to exercise his jurisdiction there (CPL, vol. X, p 347).

4. LAO: BP Accounts 5, m 2; *Cartulary of Oseney Abbey*, ed. Salter, vol. IV, pp 121-9.

5. 'They collected the reports of ill fame and acted as a kind of ecclesiastical gestapo'. *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, p 49.

actively collecting information except when directly instructed by the bishop is less certain. It would seem likely that local authorities passed information to the bishop but who exactly they were (incumbents,¹ rural deans, and/or apparitors) and whether they gave their findings to the bishop or his commissaries during their visitations or at some other time is not clear.

A number of cases would have come directly to Alnwick's notice. The errant vicars of Wooburn and Sleaford, parishes attached to the bishop's estates, were misbehaving under the bishop's nose. The rector of Aston Clinton, who neglected to ring the bells, directly offended the bishop.² Similarly, it was inevitable that those who acted contumaciously in his other courts, or obstructed his commissaries, should come before him.³ A proportion of the cases analysed here may well have been initiated as instance cases. Finally, in many of the Norwich heresy cases, and in a few of the Lincoln cases, offenders were handed over to the bishop by the secular authorities.⁴

If the record is to be believed, a large proportion of the cases never came to court. In 102 of the cases recorded in Alnwick's Lincoln Court book, there is no record beyond the charge that was made. It is perhaps dangerous to assume that no further action was taken by the ecclesiastical authorities. The bishop may well have dealt with such cases summarily while on visitation; or perhaps it is merely that the record of subsequent proceedings has been lost. In any case, those cases which have been more fully recorded illustrate the court's procedures.

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1. As was clearly the case for the heresy suspects of Earsham in the Norwich trials (*Trials*, pp 205-6, 208-16).
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 30v, 72.
 3. For example, those disobeying instructions on the administration of the goods of the intestate. John Butterwick, who was prevented from proceeding against Agnes Hykham by the threats of her husband, no doubt hastened to inform the bishop of their misbehaviour (Court book, p 23; see above, p 197).
 4. *Trials*, pp 51-2, 105, 139, 145, 152, 157, 182, 200, 211-3; Linc. Reg., f 71.

Except for criminous clerks and the Norwich heretics, who seem to have been arrested and brought before the court,¹ suspects were cited to come before the bishop or his commissaries for a particular date and place. The location for the session depended on the bishop's whereabouts.² In the diocese of Lincoln, the most frequently used places were the churches attached to the bishop's main residences, while the Norwich heresy proceedings were mainly conducted in the bishop's palace chapel in Norwich. There is no specific evidence that offenders were summoned to locations that were inconvenient to them,³ although the high rate of non-appearance on first citation may, to some extent, reflect such difficulties. It was usually the local rural dean who was commissioned to cite offenders. He was required to summon them personally if possible, and certify that he had delivered the citation. In about thirty cases the dean reported that the offender 'lurked' in unknown places, to which the response was that they be cited by 'public edict'.⁴ In a small number of cases the dean's failure to bring the offender to court resulted in their experiencing the court's displeasure. An example of this was the case of the three men who were all accused of adultery with Joanna Pegge of Ickleford.⁵ On his first appearance (1 October 1446) the dean of Hitchin certified that he had not had time to execute the order to cite them. On 4 November, he certified to John Leek that two of the accused were elsewhere, the rector of Letchworth in Rome and the vicar of Pirton in London pursuing another case in the court of Arches. On 21 May 1447, the court's patience ran out. Thomas Balscot decreed that the dean himself should be cited for contempt. That the court eventually received satisfaction is indicated by a note which records that '*tandem partes purgaverunt se coram Leek*'.⁶

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1. Cf. Logan, *Excommunication and the Secular Arm*, pp 68-71.
 2. See Appendix VI for a chronology of sessions of the Lincoln court of audience and the Norwich heresy proceedings.
 3. Cf. *Provinciale*, pp 98-9.
 4. For example, in the case of Master Ralph Martill, the non-resident rector of the mediety of Westborough, '*decanus certificavit Derby quod latitat, unde decretum est ipsum fore citandum per edictum publicum*' (Court book, p 43).
 5. See above, pp 184-5.
 6. Court book, p 3.

This case illustrates the fact that one session in the bishop's court was often not enough. Seventy-four cases were completed in one session and fifty-three in more than one. Of those cases whose end is not reported, sixty-five have left evidence of at least one session, and thirty of more than one. One of the lengthiest examples is the case of Stephen Granger, vicar of Wooburn Episcopi. On 11 June 1444, he confessed spiritual incest and non-residence to the bishop. On the 20th, Alnwick commissioned John Depyng to proceed against him '*etiam si ad privacionem et amocionem*'. Between then and 23 July there were six sessions during which Depyng attempted to proceed against the errant vicar, the session on 23 July possibly not being the last.¹ Granger failed to appear at any session. He could not have pleaded that the distance to travel was too great as three of them were held in his own church.

Such non-appearance seems to have been the greatest single factor in stretching the cases out.² In some cases this may have been the fault of the apparitors, although the court seems to have understood the problems of Geoffrey Jolybrond, dean of Waddesdon, who certified that he had frequently sought the five men accused of attacking John Toryngton, priest, but had been unable to catch up with them.³ Some sympathy may well have been felt for the dean of Hitchin who certified that he dare not personally cite the gang who had already attacked the bishop's apparitor general in the deanery (himself?) and forced him to eat the bishop's letters.⁴

Those who showed themselves contumacious by failing to respond to the summons of the court, whether innocent or guilty of the original charge, were subject to the court's censures. In forty-two cases the sanctions available to the courts were employed.⁵ If

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 60v-61 - Depyng's commission; Court book, p 91.
 2. M. Bowker discusses the problem in *An Episcopal Court Book*, pp xiii-xv.
 3. Court book, p 86.
 4. *Ibid.*, p 78; *Eng Clergy*, pp 208-212. This, with six court sessions between 2 May and 15 September 1446, was one of the longest completed cases.
 5. This practice seems almost exactly comparable with that described by Woodcock, *Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, pp 93-4.

a suspect failed to appear when he had been cited he was suspended 'ab ingressu ecclesie' or, if he was a priest, from celebrating the sacraments. Further contumacy ensured full excommunication, or even major excommunication which barred the offender from contact with all members of the church.¹ If a suspect remained excommunicate for more than forty days without seeking absolution, the bishop was then able to seek help from the crown by requesting the issue of a writ *de excommunicato capiendo*.² Failure to answer the court's summons could thus ensure quite severe punishment even for those innocent of the original charge. Hugh Kenyngton of Stow, who denied adultery with two married women, had failed to appear for his first hearing in January 1448, and so had been suspended by Balscot. Appearing before the judge on 29 March he admitted that he had received communion the week before Easter although knowing himself suspended. Although Balscot allowed him to proceed to purgation for the original offence, he enforced quite a severe penance on him for his contempt of court. He was to fast as if it was Lent for four days, and then during mass on five successive Sundays to kneel at the high altar with bare legs and feet carrying a candle of one pound weight which was to be offered at the high altar on the last day of his penance.³

When the accused or their proctors did respond to the court's citation, and had been absolved from the sentences any contumacy had invoked, the case against them would be presented. In some instances, the case would not be clear and an enquiry into the facts would be instigated.⁵ The presence of witnesses is recorded in fewer than ten of the cases. It may be that witnesses for the prosecution appeared more frequently but their evidence seems

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1. Richard Edous, late rector of Offord 'Daneys', incurred it for his many contumacies (Court book, p 8; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 234-5).
 2. See Logan, *Excommunication and the Secular Arm*, *passim*. There survive six original letters of signification from Alnwick's Norwich episcopate and forty-two for his Lincoln episcopate (PRO: C 85/137/36-41; C 85/112). See Table IV (some letters relate to more than one person).
 3. Court book, p 23. Another form of contempt of court was exhibited by Thomas Lowe of Lincoln who claimed that John Leek was a '*iudicem suspectum*' and not competent to try him (*ibid.*, p 48).
 5. In twelve cases an inquisition was mounted.

only to have been recorded in the most serious cases. For example, three of the cases concerning clerical behaviour in which the evidence of witnesses was recorded were the cases against Joanna Newbold, whose neighbours swore that it was considered true by public 'vox et fama' that she was an adulteress with Robert Boy, a chantry priest in the cathedral;¹ and those against the incumbents Stephen Granger and Robert Talbot.² Similarly, the depositions of sworn witnesses were used in a number of the Norwich heresy trials.³ Defence witnesses were heard in two cases. William Nichol of Grantchester swore to the validity of a wedding which he had attended; and John Grysvel of Wainfleet suppressed the suspicion of heresy against Thomas Cosyn by telling of his presence when the latter had received the required Easter sacraments.⁴

Witnesses for the defence of a subtly different kind were the compurgators that a defendant claiming to be innocent had to produce.⁵ In forty of the Lincoln cases (thirty-three completed) defendants were permitted to prove their innocence in this way. The number of people required by the courts, and produced by the defendants, to swear to the innocence of their neighbours varied. In one case, the defendant was allowed to purge himself on his own word.⁶ This was probably allowed because his innocence had already been proved by an inquiry. John Edwyn, one of the five men who was allowed only one compurgator, was granted this privilege because he had come 'sponte' to answer to an accusation of incontinence without being cited.⁷ One man, Richard Ilston, vicar of Wingrave,

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1. Court book, p 93. For the further significance of this case, see above, p 52.
 2. Court book, p 91 and leaf found between pp 64 and 65.
 3. *Trials*, pp 43-51, 71-2; Foxe, vol. III, pp 596-7, 599-600.
 4. Court book, pp 12, 41; *Eng. Clergy*, p 228.
 5. For a useful discussion of compurgation, see Heath, *Parish Clergy*, pp 115-16.
 6. Court book, p 2; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 240-1. John Fill, rector of Clothall, who had been accused of obtaining his benefice by simony.
 7. Court book, p 22. It may also have helped that his compurgator was John Bevves, one of the bishop's minor officials. Walter Wygan and Thomas Stoppesley of Linley, who witnessed for each other in a case of taking trees from their churchyard, look suspiciously like a case of collusion (*ibid.*, p 3).

who was accused of simony, produced twelve compurgators. However, by far the most common numbers of compurgators were four and five, with nine cases each.¹ However many compurgators a defendant produced, they had to be his peers. Hence priests were supported by priests, laywomen by laywomen, and Sir John Pygot, knight of Doddington, by six gentlemen.² When purgation was allowed, those objecting to its accomplishment were cited to come and state their objections. In two cases they did so.³ In some cases, although purgation had ostensibly proved the defendant's innocence, the court was clearly not convinced. In the Norwich heresy proceedings, for example, Bishop Alnwick's suspicions of the orthodoxy of *Dives et Pauper* clearly made him unhappy about allowing the purgation of Robert Berte.⁴ Similarly, among the Lincoln cases, William Cranwell esquire was allowed to purge himself of fornicating with a servant, but because of their bad name he was warned to remove her from his home within fifteen days;⁵ and Robert David, vicar of Grimsby St James, cleared himself of habitual drunkenness but was warned to avoid taverns.⁶

In several cases the defendants, though guilty, managed to prove that they had already been corrected before one or other of the bishop's commissaries, and in three that they had already purged themselves. The guilty were usually assigned another date to hear the court's sentence. In twenty-four cases, it was recorded that the guilty parties were warned to desist from their crime or its occasion. These people, including incumbents who were admonished to reside, were expected to reform their behaviour. Heavy fines hung over them in case of failure. For example, the parishioners of Knaptoft were instructed to repair their church on

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1. The remaining figures are three compurgators: four; six: four; seven: one; eight: two; nine: two. This does not seem to agree with Heath's contention (*Parish Clergy*, pp 115-6) that six was the norm for fornicators and twelve for adulterers.
 2. Court book, p 52; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 213-6.
 3. William Clerk objected to that of Robert Walpole, vicar of Burnham (Court book, p 87), and Roger Thomson to that of Alan Wade of Wyberton (*ibid.*, p 56).
 4. *Trials*, pp 98-102. See also Appendix VIII.
 5. Court book, p 60.
 6. *Ibid.*, p 51; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 230-1.

pain of £10 to be paid to the fabric of the cathedral.' Similarly, convicted heretics had to make formal abjurations of all their errors. In Alnwick's Norwich heresy trials, a permanent reminder to both the Lollards and the diocesan officials was produced by recording the abjuration in a public instrument in the form of a chirograph, one half retained in the bishop's registry and the other delivered to the heretic.²

Most convicted miscreants had some kind of punishment assigned. Quite a high proportion of the clergy whose guilt was established lost their livelihood. Eleven Lincoln and fifteen Norwich incumbents were deprived of their benefices during Alnwick's episcopates.³ Additionally, the fruits of the churches of six of his Lincoln clerical subjects were sequestered in the course of proceedings against them.⁴ Only seven clerks had other punishments assigned. Robert Northon, vicar of Ulceby, who had assaulted a neighbouring vicar, had to pay 100 shillings to the fabric of Lincoln cathedral.⁵ The other six had to perform some kind of public penance at the cathedral.⁶ One man, Thomas Clerk, vicar of Marston, who had admitted adultery, was the only offender, lay or clerical, who was recorded as being allowed to compose his public penance for a fine, of 13s 4d.⁷ The only clerk sentenced to fustigation was Giles Chaucer, rector of Conington, whose contumacy

1. Linc. Reg., f 43.

2. *Trials*, *passim*.

3. Norw. Reg., ff 14v, 38, 42v, 45v-6v, 51, 51v, 69v, 71, 75v, 76v, 86, 86v; Linc. Reg., ff 30v, 66v-7, 90v, 95v, 101, 102, 119v, 129, 167v; Court book, pp 7, 53, 95. Cf. Heath's comments (*Parish Clergy*, p 134) on the reluctance of the authorities to deprive incumbents.

4. Linc. Reg., ff 30v, 31, 35, 36, 46v.

5. Court book, p 49.

6. Richard Wynter, who had neglected his rectory, had to perform two peregrinations of the cathedral offering one pound of wax each time. Walter Bud, vicar of North Marston, who had committed blasphemy and violence, was sentenced to four such peregrinations (*ibid.*, pp 51,99; *Eng. Clergy*, p 231).

7. Court book, p 41. This argues against Woodcock's statement (*Medieval Ecclesiastical Courts*, p 98) that 'many [penances] were commuted into money payments', a point also made by Heath (*Parish Clergy*, p 114). However, it is not clear what the receipts headed '*pro correctionibus*' (ctd on next page)

in not answering accusations against him of neglecting his rectory, incurred one fustigation at Lincoln, where he was to offer a noble and a candle.¹ Robert Walpole, who had performed sacrilegious acts with a pyx, was given an appropriate penance. For three years he was to visit the cathedral at the feast of Corpus Christi offering a penny weight of wax to the high altar, a pound of wax to St Hugh's window and 20s to the red chest of the cathedral.²

Although physical punishment was the exception for the clergy, it was normal for the laity. The usual penance assigned to lay fornicators and adulterers, of whatever sex, seems to have been three fustigations round their parish church or the cathedral on Sundays and feast days, combined with a similiar (or slightly lesser) number around the market of the local market town. These fustigations were usually accompanied by the offering of a wax candle at the high altar of the church. More serious crimes incurred slightly heavier sentences of the same kind. For example, the assailants of the Hitchin apparitor were assigned six fustigations each around their parish church, of Pirton, and Hitchin market, offering a pound of wax to both the Pirton and the Hitchin churches after the penance. They were also ordered to pay the nuncio in recompense for his injury between twenty and forty pence each.³ Sir John Pygot, whose servants had attacked the rector of Doddington, was not sentenced to undergo fustigation but, for a great man of the area, his penance was hard enough: for five successive Sundays and feast days he was to go barefoot to his

(ctd) in the Leicester commissary general's account indicated (LAO: BP Accounts 5). These may have been commutations of penance, but they may also have been fees paid for citations, etc.

1. Court book, p 15; *Eng. Clergy*, p 236.
2. Court book, p 87.
3. *Ibid.*, pp 4-6; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 206-12. Cf. LAO: formulary 2, f 27 (late fifteenth-century). Bowker, who cites this formulary (*Secular Clergy*, p 22) claims (probably from the evidence of the cases in *Eng. Clergy*) that Alnwick rarely ordered the discipline but, in fact, quite a large proportion of those who were apportioned a penance were given a fustigation as part of it. It would seem in fact that the penances given by Alnwick and his commissaries concorded quite well with the formulary.

parish church and stand at the font during high mass holding three pounds of wax which was to be offered at the high altar on the last day of his penance.¹

The penances allotted to the convicted Norwich heretics were not dissimilar. There is no evidence that anyone was executed after the burning of White, Pie and Waddon. One might expect Margery Baxter and John Finch, both of whom seem to have relapsed, to have been passed to the secular arm, but there is no evidence of what punishment Margery received and Finch was allocated a not unusually heavy penance.² Two men, John Skyilly and John Godshill, both tried in March 1429, were imprisoned for seven years, Skyilly in Langley monastery, where he was to fast on bread and water every Friday, Godshill at a place to be assigned later.³ Godshill had come before Alnwick's predecessor, John Wakering, and so the severity of his punishment is not surprising. Alnwick was perhaps showing some clemency in not handing him over to the secular authorities.

The penances of thirty-two other convicted heretics are recorded. The main constituents of their penances were ceremonial fustigations and fasts. Twenty-six of the penitents were to undergo fustigation. These occurred around their parish church or churchyard and local market place, and were directly comparable with the Lincoln sentences. Three, Thomas Wade, John Finch and Nicholas Canon,⁴ were to receive their punishments at the cathedral, and three were to be beaten in the Norwich market place.⁵ The number of fustigations varied between one⁶ and twelve,⁷ there being some correlation between the severity of the penance and the seriousness of the crime.

1. Court book, p 52; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 213-15.

2. *Trials*, pp 188, 41-51.

3. *Trials*, pp 56, 63.

4. *Ibid.*, pp 35-8, 188; Foxe, vol. III, pp 599-600.

5. *Trials*, pp 35-8, 188, 206.

6. John Goodwyn, once round his parish church (*ibid.*, p 208).

7. Thomas Wade was to receive six at his parish church, three near the choir of the cathedral and three in the Norwich market place; Edmund Archer and Isabella Chaplain (ctd on next page)

Fifteen people who had denied the necessity of fasting and abstaining had fasts enjoined.¹ Two particularly appropriate penances were those of Thomas Love and Richard King. Love, who had eaten meat on the vigil of St Thomas the Apostle, was to fast on bread and water on that day for the next seven years. King, whose major error was to believe that after consecration only bread remained, was sentenced to three years of bread and water on the vigil of the feast of Corpus Christi and also to hold a torch aloft at the elevation of the consecrated host during high mass.² These sentences, comparable to that of Robert Walpole, indicate the efforts of Alnwick and his assistants to reform as well as to punish.

The most extensive penance imposed in the diocese of Lincoln was enjoined by William Alnwick on the perpetrators of the most extraordinary crime, those who had, with no provocation, castrated William Orgill. Richard Elger was to go at noon on the next Saturday, dressed only in his shirt and breeches, to the church of St Mary of Huntingdon. There, in the presence of the prior of Huntingdon, or John Leek, he was, lying prostrate, to seek absolution. Subsequently and for the next six Saturdays he was to perambulate the Huntingdon market place followed by the dean of Huntingdon in all his regalia who would discipline him at the accustomed places. For the next twelve feast days he was to perform a similar penance at the church of Brampton. Like the Norwich heretics, for ten years he was to visit the cathedral at Lincoln on Ash Wednesday, from which date until Maundy Thursday he was to be suspended from the church.³ In addition, he was to visit Rome within the next eight years if he was physically capable. His wife and accomplice were sentenced to like penances.⁴

(ctd) were each to receive six round their parish church and local market (*ibid.*, pp 35-8, 168, 200).

1. *Ibid.*, pp 56, 66, 68, 110, 119, 124, 130, 138, 163, 168, 172-3.
2. *Trials*, pp 104-7.
3. Cf. *Trials*, *passim*, and below, pp 218-19.
4. Court book, pp 17-18; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 216-8.

This, it should be noted, was the penance that Alnwick decided to award '*miserans senectuti et miserie dicti Ricardi*'. In a number of cases more obvious clemency was exhibited. The case of Robert Alcock the priest who was '*mente alienati*' has been mentioned already.¹ Three Boston sorcerers may well have been treated leniently for similar reasons. It was noted that Isabella Leche was poor and sickly, Richard Fleyn was '*paraliticus*' and Isabella Baylesson '*decrepita*'. Because of their situations, two of the three were passed to the commissary general for correction.² This would seem to be in some contrast to the stereotype of medieval witches as poor old women hounded mercilessly to their deaths. Similarly, compassion was intermixed with severity in the treatment of the Norwich heretics. Thomas Moone (whose house was a major centre for heresy) had his penance suspended because of his old age and debility, and Isabella Chapleyn had all but three of her twelve prescribed beatings remitted because of her '*senectutem miseriam et impotenciam*'.³

It is clear that Alnwick was not content merely to assign a penance and dismiss a case. His letters to the parish priests of St Mary of Coslany and Nayland indicate that the local clergy were expected to supervise the penances.⁴ William Brystowe, shipwright of Bishop's Lynn, stood surety in £20 that Nicholas Drye would do his penance.⁵ Alnwick's anxiety to keep track of the convicted heretics was exhibited not only in the use of chirographs for their documents of abjuration, but also the instruction to fifteen of the heretics to do solemn penance in the cathedral on the ensuing

1. See above, pp 179, 186-7.

2. Court book, pp 42-3; *Eng. Clergy*, pp 220-1. This clemency for the old and sickly should be compared to the penance enjoined on Thomas Staynfeld of Bolingbroke, another sorcerer. He was sentenced to a total of nine fustigations (Court book, p 95; *Eng. Clergy*, p 221).

3. *Trials*, pp 181, 200.

4. *Ibid.*, pp 35-8, 83-4. The parish chaplain of St Mary of Coslany in Norwich was, apparently, taking his time about ensuring that Thomas Wade underwent his penance.

5. *Ibid.*, p 174.

three Ash Wednesdays and Maundy Thursdays.¹ Accordingly, nine penitents appeared as ordered before William Worsted on Ash Wednesday, 14 February 1431. Seven were missing.² Heresy was perhaps not quite so subdued in East Anglia after Alnwick's episcopate as may previously have been assumed. However, it is difficult to imagine anything else he could have done. The record of his proceedings certainly speak of a conscientious bishop doing all in his power to arrest a dangerous threat to holy church and the souls entrusted to his care.

More generally, it seems that, despite the difficulties of first discovering misdemeanours and then bringing miscreants to court, the bishop's courts worked effectively in both dioceses. If a bishop was conscientious enough to undertake visitation and far sighted enough to employ able and principled assistants much could be achieved. On the admittedly limited evidence of the surviving records of Bishop Alnwick's two episcopates, it would seem that ecclesiastical justice could be at least as effective as royal justice.³ There is no evidence that Alnwick or his assistants were afraid to prosecute even his most powerful subjects.⁴ The guilty were punished, with some compassion for the weak, and some at least of the victims were recompensed.

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1. Fines ('Studies in the Lollard Heresy', p 85) suggested that this latter instruction was unique to Alnwick. However, the normal use of the cathedral at the beginning and end of Lent as a site for public penitence would seem to shed some doubt on this suggestion (see above, pp 74, 217).
 2. *Trials*, pp 194-5.
 3. This may not be claiming much (cf. Powell, 'Arbitration and the Law') but it would be unfair to compare them with anything other than contemporary judicial systems.
 4. See, for example, the case of Sir John Pygot, above, pp 215-6.

3. Conclusion: William Alnwick and the People of His Dioceses

It has been claimed that 'no surviving record suggests that audience business, outside the provincial courts, was extensive or onerous'.¹ Nevertheless, it seems clear that Bishop Alnwick was a conscientious and able man who employed similar people² to assist him in the exercise of his spiritual jurisdiction. The question remains of how much he actually affected the lives of those he ruled. It is perhaps impossible to assess this in any meaningful way. There is too little left to enable historians to see how others regarded him or, indeed, most of his contemporaries.

However, his actions, by their very nature, would have had a very tangible effect on the individuals with whom he dealt: on the couples who were allowed to marry, and the incumbents who were deprived of their benefices, to say nothing of the three men who lost their lives. The remaining records indicate that³ something like 230 people received dispensations from him; more than twice that many were disciplined by him or his assistants; some 120 victims of crimes had the satisfaction of seeing their cases dealt with; about 250 people were called to act as witnesses or compurgators; and something like seventy were involved in disputes in which he and his commissaries acted as judges and arbitrators. In all, we have records of over seventy parishes in the diocese of Norwich and 400 in the diocese of Lincoln which were touched by either his discipline or his grace. Bearing in mind that his Norwich episcopate has left records of few disciplinary cases except heresy, and that only three of the eight Lincoln archdeaconries have left disciplinary records, the true figures should no doubt be much higher. It would thus seem that he

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1. D.M. Owen, 'Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction in England', p 201.
 2. It should be noted that he himself only presided on twenty-seven of the 186 occasions (15%) when the president of the Lincoln court was recorded, significantly when the most serious cases were being considered. See Appendix VI for chronology of sessions.
 3. Ignoring the general indulgences he issued, and not including unrecorded verbal judgements.

affected, indirectly at least, the lives of a very large number of people. In addition, it seems likely that a bishop (who was a temporal as well as a spiritual lord) constantly on the move and involving himself, for good or ill, in the affairs of his people was, generally speaking, of more significance in the lives of his spiritual children than his modern-day counterpart.'

If many people were affected by his episcopates, was it for good or ill? Probably, the answer to such a question depends on the viewpoint of the interrogator. By his own lights, and in his own period, William Alnwick would seem to have worked hard to fulfil his obligations with both firmness in dealing with the recalcitrant and compassion for the weak. Nevertheless, if the clergy were insufficient in morals and education; and if, consequently, some of the laity found more satisfaction in heterodoxy than 'in the bosom of mother church', then Bishop William Alnwick must be counted as among those bishops who were largely to blame because their 'vision of goodness...was bounded by the already obsolescent conventions of their age'.²

The judgement made by J.F. Fines a quarter of a century ago may now have been overtaken, in the comparisons he made, by studies that have shown that Alnwick's contemporaries on the episcopal bench were, on the whole, a good deal more conscientious and able than had previously been supposed.³ Nevertheless, as an assessment of William Alnwick himself, Fines' verdict would still seem to be largely correct: 'In sum, the bishop appears energetic, resourceful and devoted to his task; far more than any earlier or later bishop or Archbishop....Unlike the majority of his fellow bishops he did his job dutifully and firmly and succeeded in what he set out to do.'⁴

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1. If the picture conjured up by *Provinciale*, p 34, of parents rushing out to meet the bishop with children for confirmation wherever he went is too fanciful, it at least gives an indication of some of the encounters between bishop and subject that have not been recorded.
 2. Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 190. See also *ibid.*, pp 186-96.
 3. Discussed above, pp 1-4.
 4. Fines, 'Studies in the Lollard Heresy', p 81.

TABLES II TO VIII

The following pages present in tabular form some of the raw statistics from which the preceding chapter was compiled. Such a statistical approach is inevitably fraught with dangers. Few, in particular, of the 'crimes' analysed fit into neat categories. Any conclusions drawn from these tables should, therefore, be cautious.

The main sources for these tables (apart from Table IV which derives from the PRO series C 85) are Bishop Alnwick's episcopal registers and his Lincoln court book

TABLE II

**DISPENSATIONS AND LICENCES GRANTED TO THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESES OF
NORWICH (1426-37) AND LINCOLN (1436-49)**

	Unbeneficed clerks		Unbeneficed priests		Unbeneficed graduates		Members of religious orders		Chantry chaplains		Vicars		Rectors		Cathedral canons		TOTALS		
	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Norwich	Lincoln	Total
Irregular birth		1 (a)																1	1
Irregular orders	1	1		1													1	2	3
Licences to preach				2		5								1 (d)				8	8
Licences to preach & hear confessions														2 (d)				2	2
Request for such licence								2 (b)										2	2
Licences to hear confessions			2 (b)				12 (c)				2 (b)	1 (d)	1	1			17	2	19
Request for such licence								3 (d)										3	3
Licence to teach school	2		1														3		3
Licence to celebrate annual								1		1				2				4	4
Letters dimissory		63						5						1				69	69
Non-residence												1	2	8 (b)			2	9	11
Non-residence and put to farm												1	2	23 (e)			2	24	26
Licence to farm												1		3 (b)				4	4
Licence to visit Rome												1		1				2	2
Incompatible benefice (f)														1 (a)		1 (a)		2	2
Pension to retired incumbent												2	1	2			1	4	5
SUB-TOTAL	3	65	3	3	0	5	12	11	0	1	2	7	6	45	0	1			
TOTAL		68		6		5		23		1		9		51		1	26	138	164

Footnotes: (a) = confirmation of papal letters; (b) = one graduate (c) = four graduates; (d) = graduate; (e) = five graduates; (f) both were graduates

TABLE III

**DISPENSATIONS AND LICENCES GRANTED TO THE LAITY OF THE DIOCESES OF
NORWICH (1426-37) AND LINCOLN (1436-49)**

	Unknown		Laymen		Widows		Couples		Families		Gentry: Men		Gentry: Couples		Nobility: Men		Nobility: Women		Nobility: Couples		TOTALS		
	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Total
Divine service in house			1	3				5		1	1	1		4							2	14	16
Divine service in oratory in house		1				1		3				1		1				1				8	8
Conserve eucharist in oratory																			1		1	1	1
Private confessor												1										1	1
Eat lactinia in Lent																1						1	1
Marriage with fewer banns than normal								2														2	2
Marriage despite consanguinity (a)							1	3 (b)													1	3	4
Marriage despite spiritual affinity (a)							2 (c)	3 (c)													2	3	5
SUB-TOTAL	0	1	1	3	0	1	3	16	0	1	1	3	0	5	0	1	0	1	0	1			
TOTAL		1		4		1		19		1		4		5		1		1		1	5	33	38

Footnotes:

(a) = Papal dispensation and bishop acts on his instruction.

(b) = Only one dispensation obtained before marriage.

(c) Dispensation obtained after marriage.

TABLE IV

SIGNIFICATION OF EXCOMMUNICATION BY WILLIAM ALNWICK AS BISHOP OF NORWICH (1426-37) AND LINCOLN (1436-49)

OFFENCES

OFFENDERS

CONTUMACY	OFFENDED OFFICIAL	Gentlemen		Laymen		Laywomen		Couples		Priests		Rectors		Dominican friars		Cathedral clergy		Nuns		TOTALS	
		Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.	Norw.	Linc.
Unspecified contumacy in unspecified cases before:	Consistory court: (a)				2			1												1	2
	Commissary general:				2		1					1								1	3
	Other commissaries of the bishop:												1							1	0
	Archdeacon:				2															0	2
Unspecified contumacy in unspecified instance cases before:	Bishop:				4		1													0	5
	Consistory court:		1		3		2													0	6
	Commissary general:			1		1														2	0
Unspecified contumacy in unspecified office cases before:	Bishop:				1							1 (b)								0	2
	Commissary general:				4															0	4
	Other commissaries of bishop:				1															0	1
Contumacy in cases of violence to clergy	Bishop:				1															0	1
Adultery	Other commissaries:																1			0	1
Not appearing in visitation	Auditor of causes of cathedral:																1 (c)			0	1
Impeding execution of will	???			1	1									1						2	1
Not appearing in unspecified cases	Commissary general:				2															0	2
	Other commissaries:										1									0	1
Not appearing in instance cases	Consistory court (a):																				
	Commissary general:				2															0	2
Disobedience	Bishop:				3			1	1											1	4
	Consistory court:				2				1										1 (d)	1	3
	Other commissaries of the bishop:				1															0	1
	Auditor of causes at cathedral:				1															0	1
Not obeying penance for:																					
	Adultery				1															0	1
Necromancy																					
					1															0	1
TOTAL		0	1	2	34	1	4	2	2	0	1	1	2	1	0	0	2	1	0	9	45

Footnotes: (a) the bishop's official or other president; (b) one man signified twice and note that he was arrested;

(c) Dean John Macworth - signified twice and only one whose absolution was signified; (d) nuns of Bungay convent disobedient to official.

TABLE V (Part 1)**CASES AGAINST THE CLERGY IN THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN (1436-49)**

CRIME	CLERK	NOTARY	DEACON	PRIEST	CHANTRY CHAPLAIN
Unknown	(a) 1				
Multiple				2	
Non-residence					
Non-residence & farming out benefice					
Non-residence & pluralism					
Pluralism					1
Neglect of fabric					1
Neglect of spiritual duties (b)					
Inadequacy of orders					
Inadequacy of learning					
Illegal acquisition of benefice					
Married clergy			1		
Forging seal of episcopal officials					
Disobedience, insubordination, contumacy to bishop or his assistants (c)		1			
Mismanagement of wills				1	
Failure to pay subsides etc.					
Theft				1	
Violence					
Drunkenness					
Sexual				3	
Sorcery					
TOTAL	1	1	1	7	2

Footnotes:

(a) = possibly a criminious clerk.

(b) = includes provision of parish chaplains.

(c) = includes usurping bishop's authority, but not most cases of contumacy which arose during proceedings against offenders.

TABLE V (Part 2)**CASES AGAINST THE CLERGY IN THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN (1436-49)**

CRIME	PARISH CHAPLAIN	VICAR	RECTOR	ARCHDEACON'S OFFICIAL	TOTAL
Unknown		2	3		6
Multiple	3	9	13		27
Non-residence		2	10		12
Non-residence & farming out benefice			1		1
Non-residence & pluralism		1	2		3
Pluralism					1
Neglect of fabric		2	16		19
Neglect of spiritual duties		3	3		6
Inadequacy of orders	1		1		2
Inadequacy of learning		1	1		2
Illegal acquisition of benefice		1	4		5
Married clergy					1
Forging seal of episcopal officials			1		1
Disobedience, insubordination contumacy to bishop or his assistants		2	3	1	7
Mismanagment of wills			5		6
Failure to pay subsidies etc.		2	1		3
Theft	2		1		4
Violence		1	1		2
Drunkenness		1			1
Sexual	3	12	13		31
Sorcery		1	1		2
TOTAL	9	40	80	1	142

TABLE VI (Part 1)

**THE RESULTS OF CASES AGAINST THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF
LINCOLN (1436-49)**

	CASE (a) NOT COMPLETED OR RESULT UNRECORDED	OFFENDER ALREADY CORRECTED OR PURGED	OFFENDER PROVED INCAPABLE	PURGED OR PROVED TO BE INNOCENT	PURGATION AFTER IMPRISON- MENT	PURGED AND WARNING	KNOWN TO HAVE IMPROVED
Unknown	2						
Multiple	(b) 20		1	2		2	
Non-residence	(d) 7						
Non-residence & farming out benefice	1						
Non-residence & pluralism	3						
Pluralism							
Neglect of fabric	(e) 9						
Neglect of spiritual duties	2						
Inadequacy of orders	1			1			
Inadequacy of learning							1
Illegal acquisition of benefice	3			2			
Married clergy							
Forging seal of episcopal officials	1						
Disobedience, insubordination, contumacy to bishop or his assistants	4			1			
Mismanagment of wills	4						
Failure to pay subsidies etc.	2						
Theft	3				1		
Violence	1						
Drunkenness						1	
Sexual	13	3		14			
Sorcery	1						
TOTAL	77	3	1	20	1	3	1

Footnotes:

(a) = in several cases purgation had been arranged but not completed.

(b) = one sequestration.

(c) = on next page.

(d) = two sequestrations.

(e) = three sequestrations..

TABLE VI (Part 2)

**THE RESULTS OF CASES AGAINST THE CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF
LINCOLN (1436-49)**

	ABJURED CRIME / INSTRUCTED TO IMPROVE	PENANCE WITHOUT FUSTIGATION	PENANCE AND FUSTIGATION	PENANCE AND OFFERING	PENANCE COMPOSED	FINE TO CATHEDRAL	DEPRIVED	TOTAL
Unknown							4	6
Multiple		1					(c) 1	27
Non-residence	3						2	12
Non-residence & farming out benefice								1
Non-residence & pluralism								3
Pluralism							1	1
Neglect of fabric	9						1	19
Neglect of spiritual duties	3						(f) 1	6
Inadequacy of orders								2
Inadequacy of learning							1	2
Illegal acquisition of benefice								5
Married clergy		1						1
Forging seal of episcopal officials								1
Disobedience, insubordination, contumacy to bishop or his assistants		1	1					7
Mismanagement of wills	2							6
Failure to pay subsides etc.	1							3
Theft								4
Violence						1		2
Drunkenness								1
Sexual					1			31
Sorcery				1				2
TOTAL	18	3	1	1	1	1	11	142

Footnotes: (c) = "resignavit et recessit".
(f) = resigned.

TABLE VII (part 1)

CASES AGAINST THE LAITY IN THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN, 1436-1449

	Laymen	Lay-women	Couples	Gentry: male	Gentry: female
Unknown	2				
Mismanagement of wills	10	1			
Forging bishop's seal					
Disobedience, insubordination or contumacy to bishop or assistant (a)	2			1	
Impeding bishop's commissaries	2				
Violence to bishop's commissaries					
Violence to clergy	8		(2)	1	2
Violence in church or churchyard	1	1			
Damage to churchyard	3				
Neglectful of church or churchyard					
Farming church / disposing of church goods without licence	4				
Withholding / impeding church dues	5				
Failure to receive sacraments	3				
Working on Sunday	2				
Disturbing services	1				
Blasphemy	1				
Claiming ghosts exist		1			
Sorcery	6	4			
Aiding escape of sorcerer					
Heresy	2				
Marrying clerk		1			
Invalid marriage			(4)	2	
Bigamy	3		(4)	2	
Sexual	44	11	(10)	5	2
Acting as pander	3		(4)	2	
Endangering children		1	(8)	4	
False claims about children		2			
TOTAL	102	22	(32)	16	5
					1

Footnote: The main figures relate to the number of cases. Those contained in round brackets, (), show the number of people involved.
(a) = This includes usurping the bishop's jurisdiction but not the many cases of contumacy during the process of the case.

TABLE VII (part 2)

CASES AGAINST THE LAITY IN THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN, 1436-1449

	Groups of people	Church- wardens	Parishioners	TOTAL
Unknown	(2) 1			(4) 3
Mismanagement of wills	(7) 2			(18) 13
Forging bishop's seal	(2) 1			(2) 1
Disobedience, insubordination or contumacy to bishop or assistant				3
Impeding bishop's commissaries	(2) 1			(4) 3
Violence to bishop's commissaries	(12) 1			(12) 1
Violence to clergy	(20+) 6			(32+) 17
Violence in church or churchyard	(16+) 3			(18+) 5
Damage to churchyard	(3) 1			(6) 4
Neglectful of church or churchyard		(5) 2	(?) 1	(6+) 3
Farming church / disposing of church goods without licence				4
Withholding / impeding church dues				5
Failure to receive sacraments				3
Working on Sunday				2
Disturbing services				1
Blasphemy				1
Claiming ghosts exist				1
Sorcery				10
Aiding escape of sorcerer	(?) 1			(?) 1
Heresy				2
Marrying clerk				1
Invalid marriage				(4) 2
Bigamy				(7) 5
Sexual				(68) 63
Acting as pander				(7) 5
Endangering children				(9) 5
False claims about children				2
TOTAL	(65+) 17	(5) 2	(?) 1	(233+) 166

NB: (+) means 'and others'.

TABLE VIII (Part 1)**RESULTS OF CASES AGAINST THE LAITY IN THE DIOCESE OF
LINCOLN, 1436 - 1449**

	Case not completed or result unknown	Case passed to lesser official	Offender already corrected or purged	Offender found to be dead	Purged / proved innocent	Abjured / instructed to improve
Unknown	(3) 2				1	
Mismanagement of wills	(13) 9			1	(3) 2	1
Forging bishop's seal	(2) 1					
Disobedience, insubordination or contumacy to bishop or assistant	2					
Impeding bishop's commissaries	(4) 3					
Violence to bishop's commissaries (a)	(4) 1				(5) 1	
Violence to clergy (a)	(16+) 10				(4) 3	
Violence in church or churchyard	(17+) 4					
Damage to churchyard	(4) 2				2	
Neglectful of church or churchyard	(5) 2					(?) 1
Farming church / disposing of church goods without licence	4					
Withholding / impeding church dues	3				1	
Failure to receive sacraments	2				1	
Working on Sunday	1					
Disturbing services	1					
Blasphemy					1	
Claiming ghosts exist	1					
Sorcery	6	2				1
Aiding escape of sorcerer	(?) 1					
Heresy	1					1
Marrying clerk	1					
Invalid marriage	(2) 1				(2) 1	
Bigamy	(7) 5					
Sexual	(39) 37		(10) 8		(12) 11	2
Acting as pander	(7) 5					
Endangering children	(6) 3				1	
False claims about children	2					
TOTAL	(154+)110	2	(10) 8	1	(33) 25	(6+) 6

NB: Figures in brackets show the total number of people involved, as several cases referred to groups of people and not individuals.

(a) = Mixed outcome for participants in the same case.

TABLE VIII (Part 2)

**RESULTS OF CASES AGAINST THE LAITY IN THE DIOCESE OF
LINCOLN, 1437 - 1449**

	Fasting and solemn penance	Solemn penance without fustigation	Penance with fustigation	Fine / money to cathedral	Restitution to victim	TOTALS
Unknown						(4) 3
Mismanagement of wills						(18) 13
Forging bishop's seal						(2) 1
Disobedience, insubordination or contumacy to bishop or assistant	1					3
Impeding bishop's commissaries						(4) 3
Violence to bishop's commissaries		(1) 1	(b) (1) 1		(b) (1) 1	(12) 1
Violence to clergy		1	(11) (c) 3			(32+) 17
Violence in church or churchyard				1		(18+) 5
Damage to churchyard						(6) 4
Neglectful of church or churchyard						(6+) 3
Farming church / disposing of church goods without licence						4
Withholding / impeding church dues		1				5
Failure to receive sacraments						3
Working on Sunday			1			2
Disturbing services						1
Blasphemy						1
Claiming ghosts exist						1
Sorcery			1			10
Aiding escape of sorcerer						(2) 1
Heresy						2
Marrying clerk						1
Invalid marriage						(4) 2
Bigamy						(7) 5
Sexual			5			(68) 63
Acting as pander						(7) 5
Endangering children			(2) 1			(9) 5
False claims about children						2
TOTAL	1	(3) 3	(21) 12	1	(1) 1	(233+) 166

Footnotes:

(b) = These penances were combined for two men.

(c) = One of these was Richard Elger who had castrated William Orgill. He was also to do solemn penance in the cathedral at Lent for seven years and to go to Rome.

V. DISPUTES AND DISCIPLINE: BISHOP ALNWICK'S RELATIONS WITH
THE RELIGIOUS HOUSES' OF HIS DIOCESES

William Alnwick came to the episcopate without the inside experience of the Benedictine, Premonstratensian and Carthusian orders that has sometimes been claimed for him.² As a secular priest whose main experience was in royal government he might not be expected to have enjoyed much prior knowledge of, or contact with, the religious orders. However, his own preferments as master of St James' hospital Westminster, dean of St Martin's le Grand, and canon of the cathedrals of York and London would have given him some inside knowledge of the working of the larger collegiate churches and charitable foundations. He would also have come into contact with the monastic prelates who attended convocation, parliament and the king's council.³

Alnwick's most interesting, and perhaps most significant, pre-episcopal contact with the religious orders does not seem to have been noticed by previous historians. In the spring of 1421, while he was, albeit briefly, in England, Henry V attempted some reform of the English Benedictines.⁴ In March 1421, the king wrote to

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1. For the purposes of this discussion the term 'religious house' has been interpreted to encompass not only the abbeys, priories, cells and friaries of the religious orders but also the collegiate churches.
 2. The most complete refutation of these claims is by Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. II, pp 367-8. See Appendix I, p 358.
 3. For example, BL: Add. Mss 14848 and 7096 (Parts I and II of the register of Abbot William Curteys of Bury St Edmunds, 1429-1446) have scattered throughout summons of Abbot Curteys to all three. Summons to council came via the privy seal office, of which Alnwick, as KPS until 1432, was the head.
 4. The records of the extraordinary chapter meeting (which include PRO: Exchequer Ecclesiastical Documents (E 135): E 135/1/2) are published in *Documents Illustrating the Activities of the General and Provincial Chapters of the English Black Monks, 1215-1540*, ed. W.A. Pantin, 3 vols, Camden Society, 3rd series, vols XLV, XLVII, LIV (1931-7), vol. II, pp 98-134. The meeting is discussed there; by C.E. Hodge, 'The Abbey of St Albans under John Whethamstede', Manchester University, Ph.D. (1933), pp 10-15; and by D. Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. II, pp 182-4. It is not discussed by J. Catto 'Religious Change under Henry V', *Henry V. The Practice of Kingship*, ed. G.L. Harriss (Oxford, 1985), pp 97-115.

command the presidents to summon an extraordinary chapter meeting,¹ which convened on 7 May in Westminster Abbey's chapter house. Having appealed to the order to return to their former zeal, the king appointed Bishop Edmund Lacy, who had preached the opening sermon, Robert Layton, the Carthusian prior of Mount Grace,² and his own secretary to confer with six delegates chosen by the monks on thirteen articles for reform which he presented to them.³ These articles stressed the obligations of superiors to reside and share in the regular life, the necessity of uniformity of dress and obedience to dietary regulations, and the undesirability of individual payments to monks ('*peculium*'), and of separate establishments for abbots and other senior monks. After some discussion, and after the return of Henry V to France, a watered-down version of his complaints was adopted in the seven articles composed by John Whethamstede.

Historians of this meeting have not hitherto commented on the part taken by the king's secretary. The only attempt at identification that has been noted is Knowles' footnote that it was 'presumably John Stafford K.P.S. 1421-2'.⁴ However, at this time, the king's secretary was William Alnwick and it was presumably he who took part in the assembly. Henry's short visit to England thus furnished Alnwick with an opportunity both to meet at close quarters a number of the prelates with whom he was to come into contact, and to consider a number of the abuses with which he would have to deal when he had attained the episcopate.

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1. The King's letter was sealed with his signet of the eagle, presumably by his secretary William Alnwick (PRO: E 135/1/2, f 1v).
 2. Apparently, he had inspired the calling of the chapter (Pantin, *Documents*, vol. II, p 98).
 3. The monastic delegates were the abbots of St Albans (John Whethamstede), St Mary's York (Thomas Spofford) and Crowland, and the priors of Lenton (Thomas Elmham) and of Durham (John Wessington) and Worcester (John Fordham) cathedrals. Among others at the chapter were several men with whom Alnwick was later to come into contact: William Curteys, and John Cranewys of Bury St Edmunds and John Derham and possibly William Worsted of Norwich (*ibid.*, p 121).
 4. *Religious Orders*, vol. II, p 183.

The large populations of William Alnwick's two dioceses of Norwich and Lincoln were mirrored by the numerous religious foundations they contained, a major concern for all responsible bishops of the two dioceses. There is no intention here to attempt to analyse the condition of the monasteries. Such study has already been partly undertaken by a number of eminent historians,¹ and shortage of space here militates against what might be too repetitive a précis of existing studies. It is from the viewpoint of Bishop Alnwick's own association with the monasteries and colleges that they will be discussed below.

Among the greatest of the ecclesiastical foundations situated within the two dioceses were, of course, the two cathedral chapters, the Benedictine priory of Norwich and the chapter of secular canons at Lincoln. In addition, each diocese contained houses representative of all the major religious orders, together with numerous collegiate churches and hospitals.² Moreover, within the diocese of Lincoln, the town of Oxford contained a collection of secular colleges and halls for the support of scholars studying at the university.

Not all these establishments came under the jurisdiction of the bishop in whose diocese they were situated. For example, although Oxford University lay within his diocese and had originally owed obedience to him, by 1395 it had acquired complete exemption from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the bishop of Lincoln. He was no longer called upon even to confirm the appointment of the university chancellor, who had once been his own officer.³ The

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1. To name but a few: Knowles, *The Religious Orders*, vol. II; E. Power, *Medieval English Nunneries, c. 1275 to 1535* (Cambridge, 1922); R.H. Snape, *English Monastic Finances in the Later Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 1926); A.H. Thompson, *Eng. Clergy*, pp 161-86; J.C. Dickinson, *Monastic Life in Medieval England* (1961).
 2. See D. Knowles and R.N. Hadcock, *Medieval Religious Houses, England and Wales* (2nd edn, 1971). See also Maps 2 and 3 for the location of some of the major houses.
 3. A.B. Cobban, *The Medieval Universities: their Development and Organization* (1975), p 102; T.H. Aston (ed.), *The History of Oxford University*, vol. I, *The Early Oxford Schools*, ed. J.I. Catto (Oxford, 1984), pp 29-30, 70-1, 97-113.

bishop did, however, retain some jurisdiction over certain of the colleges and religious houses founded within the town.

Furthermore, by the fifteenth century, houses of the Cluniac, Gilbertine, and Premonstratensian orders, the mendicant orders and all the Cistercian monasteries (but not the nunneries), were exempt from the ordinary jurisdiction of their diocesan bishop, owing their allegiance only to Rome.¹ In addition, some half dozen of the most important Benedictine abbeys in England² enjoyed an exempt jurisdiction within the dioceses in which they were situated. Two of these, Bury St Edmunds and St Albans, were respectively situated within William Alnwick's dioceses of Norwich and Lincoln. These abbots were ever watchful for invasion of their liberties and violations of their privileges. It was perhaps inevitable that they should come into conflict with a vigorous diocesan, such as William Alnwick, equally jealous of the integrity of his own jurisdiction.

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1. E.F. Jacob, *Henry Chichele and the Ecclesiastical Politics of His Age* (1952), p 10. This exemption avoided metropolitan jurisdiction too.
 2. Among them St Augustine's Canterbury, Westminster, Evesham and Malmesbury (Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation*, p 39).

1. Bishop Alnwick's Disputes with the Exempt Religious Houses of his Dioceses¹

Within the diocese of Norwich, the abbot of Bury St Edmunds exercised ordinary episcopal powers in his liberty of St Edmund within the *banleuca* of the town of Bury. The abbey was held under the pope and was exempt from the jurisdictions of both the bishop of Norwich and the archbishop of Canterbury. The sacrist of the abbey (John Cranewys during Alnwick's episcopate) acted *ex officio* as archdeacon within the town of Bury, where he presided over a court from which the only appeal was to the pope.² By contrast to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the abbey of St Edmund, which extended only over the town of Bury and not throughout the eight and a half hundreds over which it had civil jurisdiction, the peculiar jurisdiction of St Albans abbey covered twenty-two parishes in Hertfordshire and four in Buckinghamshire. One of the monks of the abbey acted as archdeacon of St Albans in this area.³

Both abbeys had fiercely maintained their exemptions from diocesan and archiepiscopal control during the preceding centuries.⁴ When William Alnwick became bishop of Norwich in 1426, both abbeys were entering a period of some revitalisation. At St Albans, the first abbacy of John Whethamstede (1420-40) had begun; and at Bury it was not to be long before the vigorous prior William Curteys took over from the ailing abbot, William Exeter, in

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1. The most recent discussion of the subject is by J.W. Elston, 'William Curteys, Abbot of Bury St Edmunds, 1429-1446', University of California, Berkeley, Ph.D. (1979), pp 338-462.
 2. M.D. Lobel, *The Borough of Bury St Edmund's. A Study in the Government and Development of a Monastic Town* (Oxford, 1935), pp 31-46; Elston, 'William Curteys', p 338. The *banleuca* was also known as the 'liberty of the four crosses'.
 3. Hodge, 'St Albans', pp 96-8. To add confusion, the archdeacon of St Albans for some of this period was one William Alnwick, who has, on occasions, been mistaken for the bishop.
 4. For some discussion of the fourteenth-century dispute between Bishop Bateman and Bury St Edmunds, see Cheney, 'Norwich Cathedral Priory', p 96.

1429.¹ Alnwick was to enter into serious dispute with both abbots during his first episcopate. It is perhaps worth noting here, however, that the sources for both disputes emanate almost entirely from the abbeys and consequently were written very much from the point of view of the abbots. It is, therefore, much less easy to determine his role, attitude and motivation than it is to analyse those of both Curteys and Whethamstede.

The first contact of any significance between Bishop Alnwick and Bury St Edmunds arose while Curteys was still prior. Curteys' register admits that heresy was rife in Bury in 1428,² when Bishop Alnwick wrote on 3 September to Abbot Exeter of his intention to hold an inquest into heresy in the parish church of St James at Bury on the forthcoming 4 October. Elston suggests that Alnwick's action may have been 'a sort of reprisal taken by Chichele, with Humphrey of Gloucester's blessing, for the presumption exhibited by Cardinal Beaufort on his arrival as papal legate'.³ Elston's argument is much flawed by his ready acceptance of Betcherman's statement that Alnwick was a joint protégé of Gloucester and Chichele.⁴ It is far more likely that the truth is contained in Alnwick's own statement, that he feared that some of the heretics whom he was determined to prosecute had sought refuge in Bury's exempt jurisdiction.⁵ Alnwick reminded the abbot of the obedience he owed to the apostolic see, describing himself as the pope's 'vice-gerent' in this matter. His warrant for interfering with the exempt jurisdiction was further supported by the jurisdiction he enjoyed over all heresy cases in his diocese through common and statute law. It seems likely, bearing in mind his contemporary heresy proceedings in Norwich⁶ that his determination to extirpate

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1. The cathedral priory of Durham was simultaneously witnessing something of a revival under John Wessington (1416-46) (Dobson, *Durham Priory, 1400-50*).
 2. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 109.
 3. 'William Curteys', p 65.
 4. L.R. Betcherman, 'The Making of Bishops in the Lancastrian Period', pp 397-419 in *Speculum*, vol. XLI (1966), pp 408-9.
 5. Add. Ms. 14848, f 109v; Norw. Reg., f 108. Cf. above, pp 201-2 for the royal commission to John Exeter to apprehend heretics 'within the liberties and without'.
 6. See above, pp 201-3.

heresy from his diocese overrode both any desire he had to interfere with Bury's liberties or any fear he might have had of the consequences of such interference. It is clear that the dying abbot was suspicious of this proposed episcopal intrusion but he seems to have decided that it would be unwise to oppose this vicergerent of the apostolic see. Consequently he appointed his own commissaries to hold a parallel investigation. Later, after the inquisition's prorogation by Cardinal Beaufort from 4 October to 14 December 1428, Prior Curteys certified to the bishop on the abbot's behalf that, recognising Alnwick's action as a representative of the holy see and, saving all the abbey's privileges, he had cited twelve jurors to appear as commanded before the bishop.'

On Bishop Alnwick's arrival in Bury on 14 December, matters seem to have proceeded on fairly amicable lines, with the bishop appearing to be happy to leave the discovered heretics in the hands of the monks and burgesses of Bury. Whether it was his intention to derogate from Bury's exempt jurisdiction or merely to do his thorough best to track down heresy in the area,² it is clear that the abbey regarded his action as an invasion of and threat to its privileges. Within a fortnight of the inquest Abbot Exeter had died.³ In February 1429, he was succeeded by the prior, William Curteys, who, having secured his episcopal blessing from Philip Morgan, bishop of Ely, thus emphasising his independence from the bishop of Norwich,⁴ set out to defend his abbey.

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1. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 109v-110. Elston ('William Curteys', p 348) suggests that it was on the appeal of the abbot that Beaufort, as an enemy of Gloucester and his protégé Alnwick, had managed to put off the evil day. However, it seems far more likely that Beaufort, whose relations with Alnwick seem to have been friendly, prorogued the meeting because Alnwick was himself prevented from attending by other pressing business. Cf. below, p 297.
 2. It is surely significant that William Lyndwood, writing at almost exactly the same time as this conflict, lays great stress on the fact that '*cognitio haereseos et punitio ipsius pertinet ad episcopos etiam in loco exempto*' (Provinciale, pp 296-7) - gloss on '*ordinarius ipsius loci*'.
 3. Add. Ms. 14848, f 20.
 4. 3 March 1429 (*ibid.*, f 24).

If Alnwick had indeed been acting for the pope, Curteys did his best to ensure that this could not happen again. On 15 April 1429, he appointed proctors to seek papal confirmation of all the abbey's privileges including its right to exemption from episcopal interference in heresy cases.¹ Eventually,² William Babyngton, who was to succeed Curteys as abbot, and William Swan, the abbey's proctor in Rome,³ succeeded in gaining a papal bull appointing John Whethamstede, abbot of St Albans, to determine the case. Not surprisingly, his decision, issued on 19 October 1430, was in favour of his brother abbot.⁴ Curteys' representatives in Rome clearly worked hard as the record of this confirmation of the abbey's exemption is followed by a stream of other papal bulls confirming its privileges.⁵ One dated 17 September 1432 clearly reflected a criticism levelled at the bishop and his predecessors by the abbot:

*'Et quia diocesani locorum auctoritate quarundem constitucionum provincial' et sinodal' mulctare solebant clericos et laicos firmarios redditum et proventum dicti monasterii necnon membrorum et beneficiorum eidem monasterii unitorum et alias graviter molestabant, W. Curteys optinuit a sede apostolica bullam infrascriptam quod liceat sibi et successoribus suis ac conventui dicti monasterii fructus redditus et proventus eiusdem ac membrorum et beneficiorum suorum quibusvis personis clericis vel laicis locare et ad firmam dimittere absque licencia diocesani vel alterius cuiuscumque.'*⁶

One of the abbot's privileges was the right to grant letters dimissory to monks of the abbey and secular clerks of the town. It

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1. Cf. *Provinciale*, p 296: '*Abbates quantumque exempti...non possunt cognoscere in causa haeresis nisi fulti sint super hoc privilegio*'. See also Elston, 'William Curteys', pp 350-2.
 2. Babyngton was in Rome for two years (BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 109).
 3. And it would seem proctor of half the ecclesiastical establishment in England. See E.F. Jacob, 'To and From the Court of Rome in the Early Fifteenth Century', *Essays in Later Medieval History*, pp 58-78.
 4. Add Ms 14848, ff 110-111v. Curteys exercised his privilege of proceeding against heretics in June 1433, when he commissioned three of his leading brethren to investigate into the existence of heresy within the liberty and proceed against any suspects (*ibid.*, f 131).
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 111v-20.
 6. *Ibid.*, f 115. Cf. below, pp 274.

is not surprising that just as the abbot of St Albans, who enjoyed a similar privilege, never asked the bishop of Lincoln to ordain his ordinands,¹ so the abbot of Bury did not present his candidates to the bishop of Norwich. Indeed Curteys seems to have employed Robert Windell, bishop of Emly, to ordain most candidates, secular and regular, from his jurisdiction. His registers are scattered throughout with both letters dismissory and letters to Robert to ordain particular men.² It would seem that Bishop Alnwick failed to appreciate this privilege.³

Curteys' register notes that in early 1433, while Alnwick was on visitation in his diocese, there appeared before him several priests of Bury's jurisdiction who exhibited to him letters dismissory they had obtained from the abbot, '*sed predictus episcopus qui contra nostram exempcionem semper fuerat infestus*', suspended all from celebrating. On their appealing to him, Curteys wrote on 14 March to the bishop informing him of the abbey's privileges. Perhaps Alnwick was genuinely ignorant of this right for he seems to have acceded immediately, albeit reluctantly, to Curteys' request that he permit them to return to celebrating the sacraments.⁴ It is perhaps worth considering the possibility that William Alnwick and other bishops, whose careers were spent mainly in civil as opposed to ecclesiastical administration, may have been genuinely ignorant of some of the privileges and exemptions enjoyed by certain inhabitants of their dioceses. Disputes may have arisen by accident rather than through deliberate invasion by the diocesan. Once such an incursion had occurred though, it would be very difficult for either party, jealous of their own positions, to back down.

The convocation at St Paul's of 5 July 1428 to 20 December 1429, which perhaps prompted the impetus for Alnwick's inquisition

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1. Hodge, 'St Albans', p 96.
 2. E.g. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 53, 76, 78, etc.
 3. The case of John Benet is noted above, p 149 (Norw. Reg., f 42). Cf. Elston, 'William Curteys', pp 353-5.
 4. Add. Ms. 14848, f 199v.

into heresy in Bury, was indirectly the cause of another matter for contention between Abbot Curteys and the bishop and his officials. In this convocation, the subsidy granted by the clergy of the southern province had included a graduated tax on stipendiary chaplains.¹ On 15 March 1430, Bishop Alnwick commissioned Clement Denston, archdeacon of Sudbury, to survey the incomes of such priests within his archdeaconry. In attempting to carry out these instructions, Denston came up against Abbot Curteys, who refused to allow him to act in Bury St Edmunds. Although Alnwick sent the abbot a copy of the royal letters instructing him to undertake the survey, Curteys still refused to allow such an intrusion. Aware though that the royal mandate needed to be obeyed, Curteys commissioned the dean of Christianity of Bury to undertake the inquisition and himself sent the resultant list of names and salaries to the archdeacon.² Curteys thus managed to avoid offending the king's majesty while preventing a repetition of the intrusion of an episcopal inquisition into his jurisdiction.

In 1433, Abbot Curteys avoided what may have seemed to him an even more dangerous opportunity for Bishop Alnwick to interfere in his jurisdiction, this time backed by a papal commission. In that year a tenant of the abbey, John Burlyngham of Wattisfield, appealed to Rome against having to pay feudal dues to the abbey. On 23 March, Martin V commissioned Bishop Alnwick to determine the case. Curteys' memorandum notes that the bishop was not a fit judge to hear the case, which belonged to the royal courts and that, on being informed of this fact, Burlyngham humbly submitted.³ Unfortunately, we do not know what Alnwick thought of the case. Possibly he agreed with Curteys that it belonged in the royal as opposed to the ecclesiastical courts. However, Curteys' peremptory dismissal of his fitness to try the case cannot have improved their relationship.

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 212-3. See also McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation in Fifteenth-century England', p 185.
 2. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 87-88v. See also Elston, 'William Curteys', pp 355-7.
 3. Add. Ms. 14848, f 318.

It is hard, from the evidence discussed so far, to determine whether or not Alnwick was deliberately attacking the abbot. However, it is clear that Curteys regarded the bishop as an aggressor. This is illustrated by certain sections of the long record of the abbot's proceedings against Archdeacon Denston:

'Quidam enim W. Alwyk [sic] Norwicensis Episcopus tempore prefati W. Curteys Abbatis contra privilegia et exempcionem monasterii voces emisit toterrimas ventumque aquilonarem fortiter exsufflavit sed benedictus Deus qui non deserit sperantes in se in nobis adimplevit misericordiam suam ipsius maliciam graciose compescendo. Quidam eciam Clemens Denston ipsius Episcopi Archidiaconus et quidam Nicholaus Bakhot contra exempcionem et privilegia ventum validum commoverunt sed Sancti Edmundi monasterium supra firmam fundatum petram ut mons stetit immobilis faciesque ipsorum confusio cooperavit et quemadmodum Berith et Astoroth a facie fugierunt Beati Bartholomei Apostoli sic isti fugierunt impii ne misericordie persequente deo tamen volente postea capti fuerunt et in foveam quam fecerant merito inciderunt'.¹

Although Bishop Alnwick would seem to have figured, at least in Curteys' mind, as the leader of the abbey's enemies, he is not mentioned at all in any of the long record of the abbot's proceedings against Archdeacon Denston.² In fact, Curteys himself does not appear much in the documentation of the case, or rather cases, which were conducted before the abbey's sacrist throughout much of 1435. There were two cases against Archdeacon Denston. One was an attack on his misbehaviour as a clergyman, strongly suspected both of keeping a Bury woman as his mistress and of abusing his office by large scale extortion from those within his jurisdiction.³ The truth concerning these allegations is elusive. Perhaps unusually, Denston seems to have been an active archdeacon.

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1. *Ibid.*, f 214 (translation in *Visitations II*, pp xix-xx). This tirade is followed by a collection of bulls and charters brought together by Curteys to provide evidence of the privileges his enemies were attempting to overthrow.
 2. The record takes up about a tenth of the space available in Part I of Curteys' register (BL: Add. Ms. 14848). It is discussed at length by Elston, 'William Curteys', pp 378-462.
 3. The case against Denston for incontinence is recorded in Add. Ms. 14848, ff 217-225v. This, together with his supposed misconduct as archdeacon, is repeated in *ibid.*, ff 277-286.

He had started his career as official to his predecessor and seems to have continued as he began.¹ Alice Cayle may well have been his mistress but her aunt's graphic account of her rape in May 1434 would seem to have been a device to secure Denston's arrest. If not, why did she wait nearly a year to make the accusation?² It also seems exceedingly strange that, if Denston was such an evil doer, he was not called before his own diocesan, Bishop Alnwick.

The clue to the abbot's proceedings against the archdeacon is contained in the other case against him. On 16 January 1435, the same date that the case against Denston for incontinence began, the abbey's sacrist, John Cranewys, commenced proceedings in a case of breach of promise against one Ralph Dey and Agnes Goldsmith, sister of Nicholas Bagot, rector of Icklingham.³ As the case proceeded it transpired that Denston, also claiming jurisdiction over the case, had permitted Bagot to solemnise the marriage between Dey and Goldsmith. This provoked a full scale prosecution of Denston and Bagot for the supposed usurpation of the abbey's jurisdiction.⁴

The case dragged on for nearly a year with all three men being imprisoned at one time or another. At one stage Bagot appealed to Rome and Canterbury, with the result that Thomas Beckington, official of the court of Arches, intervened on his behalf. Abbot Curteys then appealed to Rome, denying Canterbury's right to interfere in his jurisdiction.⁵ Beckington seems to have withdrawn. All three men, Dey, Denston and Bagot, eventually made their peace with the abbey, Bagot being forced to accept in November 1435 the (to all intents and purposes entirely one-sided)

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1. He obtained the archdeaconry in exchange with Thomas Rudborne for the deanery of Tamworth college on 27 April 1429 (Norw. Reg., f 92v).
 2. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 224v-25v.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 226v-37v, 286v-90v.
 4. The true jurisdiction is not easy to perceive as, according to the register, Dey and his two fiancées all moved (rather fortuitously for Curteys) from the archdeacon's to the abbot's jurisdiction shortly before the commencement of the case.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 230v-33v.

arbitration of the abbot, Richard Caudray, chancellor of Cambridge University (and archdeacon of Norwich), and William Bouchier.¹

The one person who seems to have played no part at all in the case is Bishop Alnwick himself.² If this was an unjust attack on his archdeacon, why did he do nothing to protect him? Did he think that the court of Canterbury had more chance of solving the problem? If Denston was guilty of all the offences of which he had been accused, why did he allow him to continue in office? Bishop Alnwick was away from his diocese for much of 1435 but cannot have been unaware of what was going on. Our ignorance of his attitude to the case may simply be because of the loss of the appropriate records.³ Whatever the bishop's view of the case, Curteys clearly regarded it as a great and justified victory over those invading his jurisdiction; a victory which he chose to celebrate by recording in his registers, the statutes, charters and early history of the house, together with the record of the fourteenth-century victory over William Bateman, bishop of Norwich, by one of his predecessors.⁴

Soon after the completion of the case, another clerical subsidy gave Curteys a further opportunity to complain that:

'Reverendus Willelmus Alnewyk Episcopus Norwicensis qui erga ecclesiam Sancti Edmundi sibi exorsam rancorem veteris iracundie nondum sepelieret cum non potuit directe privilegiis loci predicti sedi Apostolice immediate subiecte obviare vel ipsa enervare subtiliter tamen indirecte eadem ledere licet inaniter satagens',⁵

commissioned Archdeacon Denston on 4 February 1436 to certify the

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1. *Ibid.*, ff 235v-36v.
 2. It is, perhaps, possible that Caudray represented the bishop's views in the arbitration.
 3. See Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, pp 84-6, for a similar if less violent dispute between the archdeacon of Ely and the sacrist of the cathedral priory. *Ibid.*, pp 87-131 describes disputes over jurisdiction between the officials of the bishop and the archdeacon of Ely. Is it possible that Alnwick did not interfere in the case against Denston because he was not loath to see an archdeacon's power broken?
 4. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 237v-9, 243-277. Some of the charters were translated into verse, presumably by John Lydgate. Cf. also Add. Ms. 7096, *passim*.
 5. Add. Ms. 14848, f 193. See also Elston, 'William Curteys', pp 357-8.

names of all those in his archdeaconry earning 100 shillings or more. Denston '*cum dicto episcopo ut apparuit colludens*' sent the letters via his official to Bury.¹ The abbot considered these letters revealed the conspiracy of the bishop and archdeacon against his jurisdiction but, as before, not wishing to derogate from the king's power, he again completed the inquiry himself.

It would seem from this commission that the bishop still considered Denston a useful official, although the point should not be laboured too much as he was probably sending identical commissions to his fellow archdeacons. That he still considered him worthy of patronage appears towards the end of Alnwick's life, when the archdeacon received collation of the prebend '*Decem Librarum*' in Lincoln cathedral.² Denston may simply have been an unfortunate victim of the centuries-old conflict over jurisdiction between the men filling the offices of the bishop of Norwich and abbot of Bury St Edmunds.

Bury St Edmunds was not the only exempt abbey with which William Alnwick came into conflict during his Norwich episcopate. The role played by John Whethamstede, abbot of St Albans, in assisting Abbot Curteys to obtain papal confirmation of Bury St Edmunds' privileges has already been noted.³ Shortly afterwards, Abbot Whethamstede was himself to do battle with Bishop Alnwick. As at Bury St Edmunds, the abbot of St Albans was constantly on watch for encroachments on his liberties. In the 1420's, Abbot Whethamstede had clashed on a number of occasions with both Richard Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, and Archbishop Chichele.⁴ Shortly after Bishop Alnwick's successful heresy inquisition at Bury St Edmunds, Bishop Fleming made a similar inquisitorial visitation of St Albans against much the same objections.⁵

1. Perhaps he did not dare go himself.

2. LAO: Bj 2/15, f 9v, records 10s received for the induction of Denston into the prebend on 19 April 1449. This appointment has not been noted in *Fasti* I.

3. See above, p 241.

4. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 73-81, 195-205. These conflicts are discussed by Hodge, 'St Albans', pp 98-100.

5. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 34.

Nevertheless, Abbot Whethamstede's greatest battle for his abbey's privileges seems to have been initiated by the action not of his own diocesan Bishop Fleming or of Archbishop Chichele but of the neighbouring bishop of Norwich. Hamilton Thompson remarked that 'the attempt of Bishop Alnwick to visit the priories of St Albans at Binham and Wymondham met with signal failure'.¹ Although no evidence has been found that Alnwick attempted to visit Wymondham priory, it is clear that his attempt to visit the parish met with opposition.² The dispute between Alnwick and Whethamstede does seem to have derived from the bishop's visitatorial activity. After relinquishing the privy seal early in 1432, Alnwick appears for a time to have devoted himself almost entirely to his episcopal duties. Amundesham records that, out of a sense of duty, '*magister magnus et magnanimus*' Bishop Alnwick determined on making a visitation of his diocese.³ He does not record that Alnwick actually attempted to visit Binham Priory (and would surely have written of it with resentment if he had), but simply that during his visitation Alnwick approached Binham.⁴ The prior⁵ and monks are described as '*exterriti*' by the approach of a man whose power as prelate was enhanced by his positions as the king's confessor and as a recent keeper of the privy seal. Their response to his approach was to shut themselves up in the priory and avoid all signs of courtesy, such as the ringing of bells, to the bishop. Their behaviour seems to have embarrassed the townspeople who offered the bishop all possible reverence. He responded civilly to

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1. *Eng. Clergy*, p 57.
 2. See above p 207. It seems unlikely that the priory was deeply involved as one of the fundamental points at issue was the parishioners' claim to be subordinate to the archdeacon of Norfolk but not the bishop (Kent Archives Office: DRb/O/10, ff 31-2).
 3. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 300-2.
 4. Despite its ingenuity, Hamilton Thompson's dating of this visit to October 1431 (*Visitations II*, p 408) is wrong. Bishop Alnwick was in France at this time (see below, p 303-5). From Alnwick's itinerary (see Appendix VII) it seems most likely that this visit to Binham took place either in November 1432 or between February and April 1433 when he was residing at Thornage.
 5. William Brit, previously prior of Hertford, had been appointed Prior of Binham in 1429 (*Amundesham*, vol. I, p 42).

their protestations and carried out his visitation of the town as if nothing had happened.

However, William Alnwick was not a man to pass over such exhibitions of discourtesy.¹ Abbot Whethamstede may well have been right in his assertion that it was as an act of revenge that he appointed the prior collector of a clerical subsidy. This subsidy had been granted in the convocation of September 1432 with, at the insistence of the bishops, the addition of a clause that had first appeared in the subsidy grant of 1404.² This clause stated '*quod nullus collector dicte medietatis decime aut privilegii regii in ea parte concessi, aut concedendi, a collectione dicte medietatis decime, vel partis ejusdem, prout collectorum deputari contingerit, quovismodo debeat excusari*'. The bishops were clearly impatient with difficulties caused by excuses offered by those they chose to appoint as collectors.³ On 4 October 1433,⁴ Alnwick wrote to Prior Brit appointing him collector of the subsidy for the archdeaconries of Norwich and Norfolk.

The prior refused to accept the commission and, according to Alnwick's nuncio, trod it underfoot and mistreated the messenger. On hearing of this, Alnwick '*infremuit vehementer in visceribus*' and swore that he would not release the prior from his obligation. On 1 January,⁵ Whethamstede wrote in oleaginous terms to Alnwick as '*Pater praestantissime, ac pastor ex meritis prehonorande*' in an attempt to soften his heart towards his 'poor little prior'.⁶

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1. For Bishop Beckington's dispute with Glastonbury Abbey, similarly exacerbated by the lack of customary *reverencia*, see Judd, *Bekynton*, pp 135-6.
 2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 208-10, 234.
 3. For a discussion of this subject, see McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation'; also *English Historical Documents*, ed. Myers (1969), pp 790-2, which prints parts of the text from *Amundesham*.
 4. PRO: Exchequer: King's Remembrancer, Memoranda Rolls (E 159): E 159/210 Recorda, rot xj.
 5. 1434 would seem to be the right year.
 6. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 304-11. Throughout the account, the prior is described in diminutive terms as '*priorulum*', '*pauperculum priorem*' etc. Whethamstede, rather imaginatively, compared the prior's position to that of the woman caught in adultery.

Receiving no response to his letter, the abbot next personally waited on the bishop, promising to correct the prior's manners if Alnwick would only release Brit from his appointment as collector. This unsuccessful attempt was followed by appeals to the dukes of Gloucester and Bedford, neither of whom were apparently successful in their attempts to change Alnwick's mind.

Eventually, having exhausted all other means, Amundesham says, Whethamstede turned to the law and obtained three royal writs calling on the bishop either to recognise the prior's exemption or show the reason why. The misleading nature of the record here becomes apparent. The third of these writs was dated 17 October 1433, two and a half months before Whethamstede wrote to the bishop.¹ It would appear, in fact, that the abbot commenced proceedings against Alnwick almost simultaneously with those started in the exchequer (on 14 October) to make Brit collect the tax.² The prior's proctor appeared in the exchequer on 11 November 1433, claiming that because of a grant of Richard II the abbey of St Albans and its cells were exempt from collecting taxes. In addition, he acquired a royal writ confirming this immunity on 20 November.³ However, John Vampage, the king's attorney, asserted that such exemptions were overridden by the exclusion clause which had been inserted in convocation and confirmed by the king when instructing the bishops to appoint collectors. On the prior's claim that the abbot had formally objected to this clause in the convocation, the barons of the exchequer decided to request Archbishop Chichele to elucidate the disputed events.⁴ Chichele's response, in January 1434, was to state that Whethamstede had made an oral protest on behalf of his abbey of St Albans but had not mentioned any cells. The case was adjourned from January to Easter and then October, when it was decided to delay judgement on the prior's case until January 1435. In the meantime, on 26 November

1. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 311-16.

2. *Ibid.*, pp 316-26. See PRO: E 159/210, Recorda rot xj and following rotuli for the case (October 1433-February 1435).

3. E 159/210, Brevia, rot xlvij.

4. The record of the 1432 convocation (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 250-6) does not seem to contain any note of a protest by Whethamstede.

1434, not wishing to delay the king's subsidy any longer, the barons appointed the sheriff of Norfolk to undertake the collection.'

At this point, in the autumn of 1434, the emphasis seems to have shifted from the prior to the case between the abbot and the bishop over Alnwick's right to appoint priors subsidiary to St Albans as collectors. The dispute carried on for some time '*inter quos dies erat unus apud Fratres Predicatores omnium dierum maximus*' when the bishop appeared, supported by the chancellor and treasurer of England, both archbishops, and nearly all the prelates of the Canterbury province. Abbot Whethamstede had only the support of his own *jurisperiti*.²

Archbishop Kemp asserted that the bishop had power to appoint collectors; that if the king could exempt one he could exempt them all, which would leave the bishop to collect the subsidy himself; and that if the king was to reject the saving clause in the subsidy grant he would annul the grant itself. Bishop Alnwick's arguments were based on the prior's failure to state his own case in convocation, as well as the invalidity of the abbot's protest there, both as it had not mentioned the cells and because it was made orally. In his lengthy response, Whethamstede emphasised the king's power to make any concession he chose, and supported his arguments by exhibiting the charters of the abbey and cell. Unusually for the exchequer, this case does not seem to have reached a definite conclusion. Perhaps after the sheriff accounted for the subsidy in February 1435, it was decided that there was no further need to pursue the prior. Whatever the reason, it was recorded that '*versus predictum Priorem de Bynham in premissis non*

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1. PRO: E 159/211 *Brevia* (no rot number). It is perhaps significant, in view of the fact that Whethamstede regarded him as his greatest ally in the case, that John Juyn, baron of the exchequer, seems to have authorised this writ.
 2. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 329-54 records the proceedings on the 'great day'. No record of these proceedings has been found among the exchequer records, although E 159/210 rot xj does say that on 6 October 1434 the barons were assisted by both justices who, *Amundesham* claims, were present on the day described.

According to Amundesham, Whethamstede carried his campaign into the Canterbury convocation where '*infremuerunt vehementer in visceribus omnes quasi regni presules*'.² It seems probable that the convocation referred to was that of 7-23 October 1434.³ If so, Abbot Whethamstede's actions have left no trace in Chichele's register. Amundesham recorded that Whethamstede triumphantly proved that his protest made on 24 September 1432 against the clause negating exemptions had been recorded in a public instrument, thus refuting Archbishop Chichele's claim that the protest had only been made orally.⁴

Although no definitive conclusion to the dispute is recorded, Abbot Whethamstede clearly considered himself victorious in protecting the privileges of his abbey and its cells. On returning to St Albans, he discussed his opponents, of whom Alnwick '*prima erat pars actrix*', and supporters with his brethren. He also committed to verse, with great verve if not uplifting style, his thoughts about Alnwick and the royal treasurer, Ralph Cromwell, whom he clearly regarded as Alnwick's chief supporter. Similar verses were composed in praise of Sir John Juyn, the chief baron of the exchequer, who had apparently supported the abbot and was later admitted with his wife to confraternity with the convent.⁵ If Whethamstede did in fact win his case in the exchequer, he was probably right in claiming that the law was on his side. If not, Alnwick, supported as he was by Cromwell and the entire episcopal bench, would surely have triumphed.

1. PRO: E 159/210 rot xj.

2. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 354-63.

3. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 253-8.

4. Although Amundesham claims that Whethamstede forced the scribe of acts to record his protest, no record remains among the *acta* of this convocation. A protest of the abbots of St Albans and Waltham against being appointed collectors of taxes is recorded for the convocation of December 1433 (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 251). This was, of course, after Alnwick had commissioned the prior. The record of the convocation of 12 November-23 December 1435 does not survive (*ibid.*, p 258).

5. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 363-9. For the verses on Bishop Alnwick, see Appendix III.

It might be expected that having battled so hard with Alnwick while he was bishop of Norwich, Abbot Whethamstede would have found him an even more formidable opponent after his translation to Lincoln. However, the only hint of possible conflict is contained in a note in Alnwick's court book that a certain John Dryffeld, cited to appear in the bishop's court on 19 September 1448, had retired with his family to the jurisdiction of St Albans.¹ H.T. Riley's suggestion that it was 'the more intimate relation' between the bishop of Lincoln and the abbot of St Albans which ensured peace seems highly unlikely² considering Whethamstede's relationship with Bishop Fleming. Nevertheless, easier relations between Alnwick and Whethamstede after the translation are illustrated by a marginal note added to the verses against Alnwick: '*Nota, quod Praesul iste tam gratus ac graciosus dicto Abbati legitur posterius fuisse, quod ipsum, postquam resignaverat, diligeret ut fratrem, ac gratiose plurimum contra successoris malitiam defensaret. Interpretentur igitur in melius omnia quae hic scribuntur in ignominiam ipsius.*'³

These disputes with Bury St Edmunds and St Albans may simply have been the accidental results of Alnwick's insensitive but not deliberate infringement of the exemptions of abbeys whose superiors were understandably determined to maintain their position against any encroachment. Nevertheless, they occurred against a background in which the exempt abbeys felt under attack. Attempts had been made by English bishops to raise the question of monastic exemptions at the ecumenical councils of Constance⁴ and Pavia-Siena. Letters sent between the religious themselves indicate that they felt under similar threat from the prelates at the council of Basle. Abbot Curteys received at least two letters urging him to attend the council. The first, from John Fornesete, a monk of

1. Court book, p 31.

2. *Amundesham*, vol. II, p lxx.

3. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p 364. Perhaps Alnwick was prepared to be more gracious to a temporarily retired abbot than to one actively opposing him.

4. See E.F. Jacob 'A Note on the English Concordat of 1418', *Medieval Studies Presented to Aubrey Gwynn*, ed. J.A. Watt, J.B. Morrall, F.X. Martin (Dublin, 1961), pp 349-58.

Norwich accompanying Prior Worsted, warned Abbot Curteys that the bishops were working to do away not only with exemptions but also to abolish appropriations of churches by monasteries. Not only Abbot Curteys was warned. John Salisbury, a monk of Christ Church Canterbury, had written to the same effect to Canterbury and Evesham.¹ Presumably John Whethamstede, president of the Benedictine order in England at the time, had also been contacted, as he too urged Curteys to attend the council because of the attacks by the bishops on the monasteries.² In the end, after making preparations to go, Curteys appointed a proctor, but it is inconceivable that he was unaware of the fears of his fellow monks. It is, no doubt, this perceived threat which accounts for the somewhat paranoid style with which both abbots describe Bishop Alnwick's interference in their jurisdiction and the actions of the bishops in convocation.³

At a time when the government was constantly demanding money, it is not surprising that the bishops, whose task it was to appoint the collectors of the clerical subsidies, as well as the other clergy on whom the burden fell, should resent attempts to evade the responsibilities of collection.⁴ It was not only the episcopate who seemed to be opposing the abbeys. Alnwick and his supporters were not only great churchmen but also important members of the royal government, who were able to command the support of their lay colleagues. Almost at the same time that Alnwick and Whethamstede were disputing their case in the exchequer, Treasurer Cromwell, who was doing his utmost to increase the government's income, would seem to have been mounting his own attack on the abbeys. In the autumn of 1433, the heads of several of the religious houses, including Whethamstede and the prior of St John of Jerusalem, were summoned to the court of exchequer to answer charges that they had

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1. *Memorials of St Edmunds Abbey*, ed. Arnold, vol. III, pp 254-7. The letter is undated. Cf. above, pp 59-60.
 2. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 140. Letter dated 25 April with no year.
 3. Cf. Elston's contention that Curteys' attack on Denston was part of a concerted effort between the two abbots to defend themselves, particularly against the court of Arches ('William Curteys', pp 437-61). He perhaps overstates his case.
 4. See McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation'.

failed to perform spiritual duties they owed in return for land they held in free alms from the king.' Abbot Curteys was not one of those summoned. His abbey had probably already earned its immunity from such prosecution by agreeing to house King Henry and his retinue for the winter of 1433-4.

This last event reveals that Bishop Alnwick's relationship with the exempt monasteries was not one of complete animosity. At the height of his conflict with Whethamstede, Alnwick joined Abbot Curteys in welcoming the young king to Bury St Edmunds on Christmas Eve 1433.² Moreover, throughout his episcopate, Alnwick co-operated with the abbots acting in their capacity as patrons of benefices within his dioceses.³ Towards the end of his Norwich episcopate, Alnwick appointed Curteys collector of the subsidy granted by the 1435 convocation, with no apparent problems;⁴ and in October 1436 his vicar general oversaw the institution of Brother William Spygon, the new prior of Binham, presented to the bishop by his '*humilis et devotus*' Abbot John Whethamstede.⁵ After his translation to Lincoln, Bishop Alnwick was regularly named as a suitable bishop to ordain monks granted letters dimissory by Abbot Curteys,⁶ a sure sign that their conflict arose more from their respective positions than from their personalities.

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1. PRO: Exchequer Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer Memoranda Rolls (E 368): E 368/206, mm 33-8, 42. Elston ('William Curteys', pp 443-5) makes much of this point. Without a thorough search of the memoranda rolls, it is impossible to say how unusual these cases were (cf. Heath, *Church and Realm*, pp 41-2, 63, 147-8, 246-7, 268).
 2. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 128 (published in *Monasticon*, vol. III, p 113). A number of historians have written that an argument arose between Alnwick and Curteys at this time which only ended when the king forced a reconciliation on them. However, this seems to have arisen from Blomefield's mistaken reading of the account of the abbey's dispute with Bishop Bateman, which is placed in the middle of Curteys' complaints about Alnwick. (Blomefield, vol. III, p 532. His story is repeated, for example, in *Monasticon*, vol. III, p 114 and by Venables, 'William Alnwick', p 343).
 3. Add. Ms. 14848; Linc. Reg.; Norw. Reg.: *passim*. See also below, pp 280-3..
 4. Add. Ms. 14848, ff 302-8.
 5. Norw. Reg., ff 87v-8.
 6. Add. Ms 7096, ff 115v, 132, 138v-9.

It should also be remembered that the abbots were in fact on the same side as the bishops in the fight to protect the church from inner decay and outer attacks. Both abbots compiled ordinances for the reform of their house and its cells which would have met the approval of this strictest of visiting bishops.¹ Curteys might object to Alnwick setting up an episcopal inquisition in the town of Bury, but he was no supporter of the heretics. Whethamstede's response to Alnwick's action against the Lollards is illustrated by the gleeful way in which the news of the three burnings in Norwich was recorded in the chronicle of his acts.²

Bury St Edmunds and St Albans, although the most important exempt abbeys in Alnwick's dioceses, were not, of course, the only ones. Apart from what appear to be signs of minor altercations between Alnwick and the abbot of the Cistercian abbey of Sawtry,³ his relations with the other exempt houses of his dioceses seem to have been remarkably tranquil. Probably the greatest privilege these houses enjoyed was their exemption from episcopal visitations. This explains both Bury's unwillingness to accept Alnwick's heresy inquisition and Binham's fear at his approach. As William Alnwick is possibly best remembered for his visitation of the non-exempt houses in his jurisdiction, such fears are perhaps understandable.

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1. Elston, 'William Curteys', pp 112-37; *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 102-115.
 2. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 29.
 3. In November 1447, Alnwick warned the executors of Thomas My, rector of Hemingford, that they must not administrate his goods on the probate of the abbot; in January-February 1448 he seems to have been making judgement on whether the abbot could claim an exemption from his jurisdiction; and in September of the same year his commissary John Derby was overriding any such exemption by citing Gilbert Skot, monk of Sawtry, for adultery (Court Book, pp 21, 22, 26). *Eng. Clergy*, pp 244-5 publishes the second case under the heading 'A doubtful abbot'. It seems at least possible that the abbot came to prove not his position as abbot but rather his authority to prove wills which had been questioned in the first case mentioned; and that Hamilton Thompson has not fully understood the case he publishes.

2. Bishop Alnwick and the Religious Foundations of his Dioceses

It was by regular visitation of the parishes and religious houses within his jurisdiction that a bishop most effectively ensured that his diocese was in a healthy spiritual state. If diocesans were expected to perambulate their entire diocese every three years,¹ this regulation can never have been applied too rigorously in England. Most English dioceses, with possible exceptions such as Ely and Rochester, were far too large and populous for even the most committed of bishops to complete an entire visitation triennially. This was particularly true of the enormous diocese of Lincoln, and even the smaller area covered by the diocese of Norwich would have taxed the most competent and tireless of diocesans. Nevertheless, whatever its difficulties it is clear that visitation was regarded as an essential tool of discipline not only by the bishops but also by the religious orders themselves who carried out regular visitations of each other's houses.²

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1. As claimed by Hamilton Thompson (*Eng. Clergy*, pp 45, 60; *Visitations I*, p xxv). But cf. Cheney (*Episcopal Visitation*, p xi), who says that in the early thirteenth century 'visitations were not repeated at fixed intervals' and does not claim that they ever were in that century at least.
 2. Pantin, *Documents*, and the monastic registers cited in this chapter, provide numerous instances of this practice in the Benedictine order. For example, in the chapter of 1426, the proctor of the prior of Norwich, the visitor of the Ely and the Norwich dioceses, stated '*quod in omnibus locis dictarum diocesum vice et nomine patris sui per eum regulariter visitatis plus laudum preconis extollendum quam alicuius correctionis rigore invenerat reformandum*'. For the Lincoln diocese the proctor of the abbot of Peterborough certified '*quod ipse universa monasteria ipsius diocesis spaciose seriatim et laboriose personaliter visitavit, in quibus omnia bene et honeste et monastico ordini congruentia sunt reperta, exceptis paucis et levioribus quibusdam articulis coram eo detectis, que monasteriorum patribus secundum iuris exigentiam commiserat emendanda*' (*ibid.*, vol. II, pp 164-5). The Austin canons seem to have been rather more searching in their mutual visitation (*Chapters of the Augustinian Canons*, ed. H.E. Salter, OHS, vol. LXXIV (1922), especially pp 89-114).

Thanks to the fortunate survival of his visitation minutes, William Alnwick is well known for his visitation of the ecclesiastical foundations of the diocese of Lincoln. A contrasting lack of sources makes the visitation he undertook in his first diocese less well known and less amenable to analysis. However, there is sufficient evidence that he did visit it, for his diligence to have been noted by historians. For example, Knowles' quotes, with approbation, Hamilton Thompson's remark that the 'thoroughness with which in later years he perambulated the wider area of the diocese of Lincoln was a continuation of the conscientious diligence which gave him a remarkable eminence among the prelates of his age'.²

Bishop Alnwick's visitation of the Norwich diocese houses is evident not only from his itinerary³ but also from a number of notes scattered throughout his Norwich register. The only citations recorded are those commanding the prior of the cathedral and the dean of St Mary's in the Fields, Norwich to be ready for visitation on 25 and 27 August 1429 respectively.⁴ This would seem to have been the start of visitatorial activity which included depriving Robert Felbrygg, abbot of North Creaque, of his abbey's administration.⁵ In March and April 1430, Alnwick was at West Acre and Walsingham Priors,⁶ and in May 1431 he was evidently in the process of visiting St Giles hospital, Norwich.⁷ He visited Hickling Priory in April, Holy Trinity Priory, Ipswich and Bricett Priory in August and Ingham and Walsingham Priors in November 1432.⁸ In April 1433, the bishop was recalling his recent

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1. *Religious Orders*, vol. II, p 209n.
 2. *Visitations* II, p 409. One wonders, however, whether his eminence would have been noticed were it not for the survival of the Lincolnshire records - a point which should be remembered when comparing him with his contemporaries.
 3. See Appendix VII (Cf. *Visitation* II, pp 404-13).
 4. Norw. Reg., f 100. It should be remembered that no citations are recorded in the Lincoln register.
 5. By 7 October 1429 (*ibid.*, f 36.)
 6. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 87.
 7. Norw. Reg., f 46v.
 8. *Ibid.*, ff 54, 56, 58v.

visitation of Flixton nunnery where he had permitted the venerable prioress to resign her position.' It is possible that the wholesale excommunication of all the nuns of Bungay convent for '*multiplicias contumacias rebelliones et offensas coram officiali nostro in non parendo monicionibus canonicis*' arose from their failure to submit to injunctions arising from a visitation.² Similarly, in 1434, the election of a new prioress of Blackborough nunnery was confirmed by the bishop's two commissioners, John Wygenhale and Thomas Ryngstede, perhaps during a visitation of the house.³

The most well known visitation of a religious house during Alnwick's Norwich episcopate was, similarly, carried out by Ryngstede. In 1427, he was commissioned to investigate crimes and excesses at Redlingfield Convent, including dilapidation and incontinence '*in tantum quod totius vicinie populus inde obloquitur, et non modicum scandalum generatur*'.⁴ The prioress, Isabella Hermit, admitted disobeying earlier injunctions, and making the 'Lollard' statement that it was better for the nuns to be incontinent than to live chastely. She denied her own incontinence with the priory's bailiff, but there was evidence that she had erased records of his base birth from the priory's muniments, and she was unable to find compurgators to prove her innocence on this and a number of other accusations. Guessing that Ryngstede was about to deprive her of her office, she resigned '*pure sponte et simpliciter*'. Having accepted her resignation, Ryngstede dealt with her sisters, imposing penance of one day's fasting for their disobedience and proprietary behaviour and enjoining the performance of solemn penance on one Joanna Tate who had admitted adultery.

1. *Ibid.*, ff 107-8.

2. PRO: C 85/137/37 (22 July 1433).

3. Norw. Reg., f 71v.

4. *Ibid.*, ff 104-6. The text of the inquisition, without the prioress's resignation, is transcribed in *Visitations II*, pp 413-7. The case is mentioned in *VCH Suffolk*, vol. II, pp 9, 83-4; Jessopp, *Norwich*, p 147; and by E. Power, *Medieval Nunneries*, pp 87-8.

No matter how vigorously the diocese of Norwich was visited by Bishop Alnwick and his commissaries, the chance survival of the Lincoln visitation records make it inevitable that more attention has been paid to his activities there.¹ Hamilton Thompson has well described the procedure for episcopal visitation,² which bears a marked resemblance to that followed in the thirteenth century.³ The only item missing from the records that survive is any evidence of Bishop Alnwick's reception of the procurations to which he was entitled from the houses he visited.⁴

The surviving records provide evidence of visits to a total of sixty-eight religious foundations together with their cells. These included ten houses of monks: six abbeys and three priories of the Benedictine order and one of Cluniac monks; thirty houses of Austin canons; and nine houses of Benedictine, six of Cistercian and four of Augustinian nuns. In addition, seven collegiate churches, including two Oxford colleges, and two hospitals were visited. It is unlikely that the record that has survived is complete. Alnwick's itinerary suggests that other houses may well have been visited, and two cases in his court book relating to the incontinence of nuns at Burnham suggest the abbey there as a further possibility.⁵

Some houses received more than one visitation. Bardney abbey was visited on four occasions, Peterborough abbey and the nuns of Stamford St Michael's three times, and Dorchester abbey and Fotheringhay college twice each. There is also evidence that Ankerwyke, Catesby and Dunstable priories and Nutley abbey were

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1. It is worth noting that his Lincoln register contains hardly any more notice of visitations than his Norwich register and considerably less than those of his two predecessors at Lincoln. The records from the registers of Fleming and Gray are printed in *Visitations I*.
 2. *Eng. Clergy*, pp 178-80; *Visitations I*, pp ix-xi.
 3. Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation*, especially pp 54-103.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp 104-18; Snape, *English Monastic Finances*, pp 97-9. Benedict XII laid down the scale of fees in 1335.
 5. Court book, p 87.

visited more often by the bishop or his commissaries than the documents record. Unless an inordinate amount of the record is lost, it seems likely that, rather than taking the houses by turn in any particular order, the bishop visited those houses which caused him particular concern as often as he thought necessary. This suggestion is supported by the recording, in a small number of cases, of the fact that the bishop visited because he had heard critical reports of the house, rather than because of his duty to undertake his ordinary visitation.¹ The bishop's visitation might take just one day,² several consecutive days³ or be spread over several months.⁴

These visitation records (thanks to their publication by A. Hamilton Thompson) are very well known and have been widely used by scholars to illustrate both the machinery of diocesan administration and the condition and way of life of the institutions examined. Any attempt to analyze them here in great detail would be in danger of merely repeating the conclusions of other studies.⁵ It is, however, worth noting that while the very nature of the source is such that it is difficult to see anything but complaints, in fact a number of houses seem to have been in a satisfactory condition. Even David Knowles who, as a stickler for monastic rectitude himself, had a very critical view of the state of monasticism in the period, recognised the Augustinian houses of

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1. For example, Markby (1438), Spalding (1438), Bardney (1441), Stamford St Michael (1442), and Nutley (1447) seem to have undergone extraordinary visitation (*Visitations* II, pp 225, 328, 28, 68, 351, 253). Cf. Cheney, *Episcopal Visitations*, pp 119-32.
 2. As for example at Stonely and Studley priories (*Visitations* II, pp 359-60).
 3. E.g. at Bicester priory and Leicester abbey (*ibid.*, pp 34-6, 206-17).
 4. For example, the visitation of Peterborough abbey which commenced on 10 September 1446, continued on 11 September, was adjourned to 8 February 1447 and continued on the 9th when it was adjourned until 23 April, from which date no more is known (*ibid.*, pp 285-302).
 5. For some examples of such studies, see above, p 12.

Missenden, Northampton St James, Owston, Wellow, and Wymondley and the Benedictine Crowland and Eynsham abbeys as 'respectable'.

It is not easy to assess the effectiveness of these visitations.² It is clear that Alnwick, his fellow bishops³ and the houses visited took the process seriously. It is possible to note improvements in some houses, such as Bardney,⁴ Ankerwyke⁵ and Peterborough⁶ from visitation to visitation. But other houses, such as Thornton,⁷ present a depressing picture. It should not be forgotten that many of the smaller houses, especially the nunneries, were struggling constantly against the kind of grinding poverty which make it difficult to lead uplifting lives. Entry to a religious order or to a collegiate church did not automatically make a man or woman either an administrative genius or a saint. By far the majority of the crimes revealed during the visitations are exhibitions of human nature at work in a community.

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1. Knowles, *Religious Orders*, vol. II, p 212. One might add to this, among others, Rothwell and Goring priories whose only fault seems to have been in the positioning and material of the nuns' veils (*Visitations* II, pp 319-20, 118); Osney abbey and Wroxton priory, which both seem to have been in an excellent state (*ibid.*, pp 263-4, 395-6); Oriel and Lincoln colleges (*ibid.*, pp 267-9); and Kirby Bellars priory where Alnwick admitted he found '*pauca gravia*' to complain about (*ibid.*, p 167).
 2. Hamilton Thompson (*Eng. Clergy*, pp 180-1); and Knowles (*Religious Orders*, vol. II, pp 212-3) make some attempt.
 3. Leaving aside Alnwick's predecessors at Lincoln (see *Visitations* I), it is clear that many, if not most, of his colleagues undertook visitations of the religious houses of their dioceses. See, for example, Judd, *Bekynton*, pp 134-6; *Registrum Thome Spofford, Episcopi Herefordensis, A.D. MCCCCXXII-MCCCCXLVIII*, ed. A.T. Bannister, Canterbury and York Society, vol. XXIII (1919), *passim*. In contrast, there is little evidence that Bishops Arundel (while at Ely) and Langley visited many houses in addition to their own cathedral priories (Storey, *Thomas Langley*, pp 192-205; Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, p 46), although to be fair to them their dioceses did not present them with nearly so many opportunities as the dioceses of Lincoln and Norwich.
 4. *Visitations* I, pp 1-7; *Visitations* II, pp 9-34.
 5. *Visitations* II, pp 1-9.
 6. *Visitations* I, pp 100-3; *Visitations* II, pp 269-302.
 7. *Visitations* I, pp 120-2; *Visitations* II, pp 370-82.

Bishop Alnwick and his contemporaries were probably more fully aware than twentieth-century historians of the doctrine of original sin. It was his job as shepherd of his flock to understand his subjects' human failings, absolve them from their sins, enjoin them to do better and to be prepared to go through the whole process again on his next visit. He himself is revealed as a stern, but just, judge, rather than as a loving father,¹ determined that the failings of his spiritual children were not to be his fault. That he did not always succeed was probably more attributable to human nature and economic circumstances than any intrinsic flaws in either the system or his administration of it. That he did not always fail is perhaps a tribute both to him and to the ability of some of his subjects to improve on their nature.

Alnwick's attitude to his own role is perhaps best illustrated in his injunctions to Ramsey abbey in 1439. In these he admonished the abbot to obey him 'even as you wish to avoid the peril of our admonitions made to you above, taking most diligent heed over the Lord's flock which is entrusted to your wardship and care, according to the form of the sacred canons above written, so that at the last judgement you may be able to say, "Those whom thou has given me I have kept"'.² These may be words of conventional piety but there is no reason to doubt their sincerity and every reason to suppose that Alnwick considered that they applied to himself just as much as they did to the errant abbot of Ramsey.

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1. Alnwick's sternness is revealed, for example, in his 1442 injunctions to several nuns of Rothwell priory, who seem otherwise to have been blameless, to wear their veils down to their eyebrows (*Visitations* II, pp 319-20). Although there is no evidence that Bishop Alnwick's preachers employed the text most favoured by Bishop Giffard, the thirteenth-century bishop of Worcester, for his visitations of nunneries, it would seem to have been a suitable choice for him: 'Hast thou daughters? Give heed to their body, and make not thy face cheerful towards them' (*Ecclesiasticus*, chapter vii, v 26 - cited by Cheney, *Episcopal Visitation*, p 64). It is perhaps worth noting that a conscientious fifteenth-century father may well have been more aware of a duty to be strict than his twentieth-century counterpart.
 2. *Visitations*, II, p 318. The text is *John*, chapter XVII, v 12.

Visitation, while the most intimate, and because of the survival of its records, the most prominent aspect of Alnwick's relations with the religious foundations of his dioceses, was not by any means the only point of contact between them. His itineraries reveal that there were a number of houses that received visits from him which have left no record of formal visitation. This may, in some cases, be due to a dearth of records but there are at least a few instances where formal visitation cannot have occurred because the houses were exempt from his jurisdiction. His most famous non-visitatorial stay was during the period of Henry VI's sojourn at Bury St Edmunds in 1433-34. If Alnwick did not actually reside in the abbey after greeting the king on Christmas Eve, his itinerary certainly shows that he spent a good deal of time in the area between December 1433 and March 1434.¹ Similarly, although Cistercian houses of monks were exempt, bishops apparently had the right to procurations from them '*ratione primi adventus*'.² It may have been the claiming of such rights that brought Alnwick to Garendon on 22 January 1441 and Pipewell on 22 June 1442.³ Moreover, his visits to his house at Thame would have brought him into contact with the Cistercian abbey there.⁴ Friendly relations with the abbot of Garendon at least would seem to be illustrated by the latter's loan to Alnwick of a book by Origen.⁵ This is almost the only remaining hint of the bishop's taste in reading.⁶

If some religious houses could expect to see the bishop for informal visits, he and his officials apparently used others when carrying out some of their administrative acts. In particular, it would seem that his vicars general used Holy Trinity priory, Ipswich and St Leonard's priory, Stamford as occasional bases for

1. Norw. Reg., ff 66-68.

2. *Visitations* II, p 112.

3. Linc. Reg., ff 125v, 183.

4. *Ibid.*, ff 140, 179v.

5. *Visitations* II, pp 112-13.

6. See Appendix VIII for a list of books he is known to have possessed.

action respectively in the dioceses of Norwich and Lincoln.¹ Other houses were used on an *ad hoc* basis: Langley Abbey provided a prison for at least one convicted heretic;² Bishop Alnwick gave his pontifical blessing to the new abbot of the Premonstratensian house of Newbo in the church of the Benedictine abbey of Eynsham;³ and he consecrated Bishops Beckington and Langton, respectively, in the old collegiate church at Eton and King's College chapel, Cambridge.⁴

Similarly, while Alnwick was bishop of Norwich, although Norwich cathedral was the main site for conferring orders, he also used a number of other bases. Among the churches that witnessed him ordaining clergy were the churches of the Dominican friars at Thetford;⁵ the Augustinian priory at Walsingham;⁶ the collegiate church of St Gregory at Sudbury;⁷ and the conventual church of the Franciscan friars of Babwell by Bury St Edmunds.⁸ In addition, his suffragan, Robert Ryngman, officiated in the church of Mountjoy Priory on 27 March 1434.⁹

Although Alnwick's Norwich register contains no record of the ordination of members of religious orders,¹⁰ it is highly likely that at least the houses which hosted the ceremonies would have taken advantage of his presence to accomplish the ordination of any candidates they might have had. That he was expected to ordain

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1. See above, p 114, 124-6.
 2. *Trials*, p 56. It would thus seem that at least one religious house acceded to the request of the bishops, made in the 1428 convocation of the Canterbury province, to do so (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 192-5).
 3. *Linc. Reg.*, f 31.
 4. A.F. Judd 'The Episcopate of Thomas Bekynton, Bishop of Bath and Wells, 1443-65', pp 153-65, *JEH*, vol. VIII (1957), p 155; *Linc. Reg.*, f 67.
 5. 20 December 1427 (*Norw. Reg.*, f 121).
 6. 1 April 1430 (*Norw. Reg.*, f 128v).
 7. 14 June 1432 (*ibid.*, f 136).
 8. 19 December 1433 (*ibid.*, f 139v).
 9. *Ibid.*, f 140v. It was not unusual for bishops to use conventual churches for ordinations (see, for example, Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, p 209).
 10. See above, p 73, and also Williams, 'Ordination in the Norwich Diocese', for some discussion of this subject.

monks is clear from letters presenting candidates to him contained in the registers of contemporary abbots.¹ Alnwick himself issued letters dimissory to regular ordinands.² The part played by religious houses in granting titles to ordinands, if not yet sufficiently explained, is well known.³

Complementary to the task of ordination was the episcopal role of receiving the profession of candidates entering religious orders. The only records that remain of Bishop Alnwick receiving such professions are those relating to the monks of Norwich cathedral priory.⁴ However, the bishop's role in receiving the profession of nuns is neatly recalled by his injunctions for Markyate priory: 'we charge and enioyne yowe, prioress, ... that as sone as ye may and wythe haste possyble ye do your sustres now nouyces that are of lawfulle age and that hafe staide in religyon overe j yere of prefe to be expressely professed by a bysshop wythe oure autoritee, and to suche tyme as thal be so professede ye [not] putte to occupye any office wyth ynne or wyth owte your place'.⁵

If the evidence for professions of the religious is scanty, there is a plethora of material illustrating the bishop's role in confirming candidates in positions of authority, even within exempt orders. The Cistercians and Premonstratensians, while exempt from his jurisdiction in most matters, certainly requested his blessing for newly elected superiors. Alnwick's Lincoln register records the submission made to him by the new abbot of the Cistercian abbey

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1. For example, BL: Add. Ms. 33450 (Register of Ramsey Abbey, 1412-1538), ff 8, 10v, 11. In September 1437, the abbot of Ramsey presented five candidates, two for the priesthood and three for the diaconate. Two of the deacons were subsequently candidates for the priesthood.
 2. Granted 21 February 1437 to Richard More canon of Cold Norton and on 15 February 1442 to four monks of Ramsey (Linc. Reg., ff 28, 76v).
 3. For the latest, rather ingenious, suggestion on this point, see R.N. Swanson, 'Titles to Orders in Medieval English Episcopal Registers' *Studies in Medieval History Presented to R.H.C. Davis*, ed. H. Mayr-Harting and R.I. Moore (1985), pp 233-45.
 4. See above, p 72.
 5. *Visitations* II, p 230 (1442).

of Bruerne,¹ and a commission to his suffragan bishop to bless the newly elected abbot of Woburn.² Premonstratensian superiors were presented to the bishop for his blessing by fellow abbots of the order. For example, on 30 March 1440, John, abbot of Welbeck, and Henry, abbot of Newsham presented John Wodethorpe, recently elected abbot of Hagnaby, for Alnwick's pontifical blessing. This was conferred by the bishop during mass in his cathedral on 3 April.³ Even the exempt Benedictine abbeys presented the new priors of their cells for episcopal confirmation and blessing.⁴

Alnwick's registers contain frequent confirmations of elections of superiors to the non-exempt houses of the Benedictine and Augustinian orders, and the nunneries of all orders.⁵ In addition, on 29 September 1429, Bishop Alnwick confirmed Thomas Netesherd's election as superior of the priory of Ingham of the obscure Trinitarian order.⁶ It seems also that episcopal confirmation was necessary for the appointment of at least some of the obedientiaries in this house. For example, in 1426, the same Thomas Netesherd had been admitted to the office of sacrist on the presentation of his prior. This confirmation may have been necessary as the post of sacrist seems to have involved the cure of souls of Ingham parishioners.⁷ Similarly, the bishop is found confirming the elections or presentations of the heads of collegiate churches and hospitals throughout his registers. For example, frequent admissions were made during Alnwick's Lincoln

1. Linc. Reg., f 29v. - undated.

2. *Ibid.*, f 31 (1437).

3. Linc. Reg., ff 34v, 36.

4. E.g., on 24 October 1436, Brother William Spygon, monk of St Albans, newly appointed prior of Binham, appeared before Alnwick's vicar general, John Wygenhale, with letters from Abbot Whethamstede seeking confirmation of his position (Norw. Reg., ff 87v-8).

5. For the expenses incurred by the new abbot of Peterborough in 1438, see CUL: Peterborough Ms 2, f 4, published in *English Historical Documents, 1327-1485*, ed. Myers, pp 793-5. The co-operation between royal and episcopal power in confirming elections is evident in PRO: Chancery: Ecclesiastical Petitions (C 84), *passim*.

6. Norw. Reg., f 33v.

7. *Ibid.*, f 19v.

episcopate to the hospital of St John the Baptist, Bedford, the patronage of which clearly belonged to the office of Bedford's mayor.¹

The bishop's role was not merely passive. A number of the most important college prebends were in his gift. The most prominent example of this (apart from Lincoln cathedral) was the collegiate church of St Mary in the Fields, Norwich, whose canons were usually his own administrative assistants.² It was not only in the secular churches that Alnwick's choice was effective. There are a number of instances of his collating nunneries. For example, on 11 March 1434, after the 'free' resignation of Sara Rycher, prioress of the Benedictine priory of Bungay, the sub-prioress and her sisters '*sponte*' resigned their right of election into the bishop's hands, and he appointed Margaret Takell as prioress.³ A number of houses seem to have fallen to his collation because of the failure of their inmates to elect a suitable superior. This seems to have been the case when Bishop Alnwick collated Chetwode priory to Brother John Humberston, canon of the Augustinian monastery of Haughmond.⁴ Even so relatively important an abbey as Bardney could fall to the bishop's gift. On 22 December 1447, the king sent to the bishop signification of royal assent to the election of John Bracy, prior of Bardney, to fill the vacant abbacy.⁵ However, on 7 January 1448, Bishop Alnwick wrote to the king, informing him that '*eleccionem contra iuris formam attemptatam ac personam electam propter ipsius nimiam simplicitatem ad regend' dictum monasterium minus idoneam invenimus*', and that he therefore collated the abbey

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 184, 187, 189v. Examples from the Norwich diocese include Roger Pratte confirmed as master of St Giles hospital Norwich, 17 May 1431 (Norw. Reg., f 46v); Henry Trevelyan instituted as master of Wingfield college (*ibid.*, f 61).
 2. The deanery was held for much of the period by Alnwick's leading servants Thomas Ryngrstede and John Wygenhale.
 3. Norw. Reg., f 67v. One may doubt the freedom of the nuns' action. In July 1433, Rycher and nine nuns had been under sentence of major excommunication (PRO: C 85/137/37).
 4. Linc. Reg., f 193v.
 5. CPR 1446-52, p 116.

to Gilbert Multon, monk of Crowland and bachelor of theology.' The king later confirmed the bishop's 'provision'.²

Although the bishop of Lincoln would not seem to have been the official patron of Bardney Abbey, he filled this role for Dorchester and Eynsham abbeys,³ and Lincoln College, Oxford, which had been founded by Bishop Fleming in 1429.⁴ In addition, he was the official visitor not only of Lincoln College but also of Oriel college.⁵ This position was reflected both in his actual visitation of the two colleges in 1445,⁶ and in his confirmation of, and occasional dispensation from, Oriel's statutes.⁷

Although not the sole founder of any such important establishment, William Alnwick was a valuable supporter of such ecclesiastical enterprises.⁸ His involvement with Henry VI's two collegiate foundations at Eton and Cambridge is well known.⁹ Eton was situated within the diocese of Lincoln. Before a new college could be raised, the diocesan's permission needed to be obtained and compensation arranged for any loss he might sustain thereby;¹⁰

1. PRO: C 84/47/5.

2. CPR 1446-52, p 118. Thompson (*Visitations* II, p 10) is therefore mistaken in writing that 'it appears that the pope had...made a provision...to Multon'. Multon was the monk chosen to preach before Alnwick at his visitation of Crowland (*Ibid.*, p 54). This prominent member of one of the houses most intimately connected with Alnwick was clearly a suitable choice as abbot of what had been a rather troublesome abbey.

3. *Visitations* I, p 57; *Visitations* II, p 70.

4. *Ibid.*, II, p 267.

5. Aston (ed.), *The History of the University of Oxford*, vol III, *The Collegiate University*, ed. J. McConica (Oxford, 1986), p 404.

6. *Visitations* II, pp 267-9.

7. *Oriel College Records*, ed. C.L. Shadwell and H.E. Salter, OHS, vol LXXXV (1926), pp 62 (confirmation of statutes June 1445), 62-3 (dispensation to elect as provost, John Hals, who was not a member of the college, February 1446).

8. In October 1442, he assisted Archbishop Chichele at the consecration of All Soul's chapel (H.C. Maxwell-Lyte, *A History of the University of Oxford from the Earliest Times to the Year 1530* (1886), p 355).

9. See also below, pp 311-13.

10. *Eng Clergy*, p 159; K.L. Wood-Legh, *Perpetual Chantries in Britain* (Cambridge, 1965), p 54.

Henry VI could not hope to succeed in his aims for Eton without Alnwick's co-operation. On 12 September 1440, three men were appointed 'to declare to William bishop of Lincoln the king's design to found a college...'.¹ No doubt Alnwick was already aware of the project. By 29 September, he was proclaiming his gratitude to God and the king and his readiness to assist the project, saving always his diocesan rights and those of his church of Lincoln. He does not, however, appear to have been sufficiently involved to wish himself to found the college, as he made William (Aiscough), bishop of Salisbury, Thomas Beckington, Richard Andrew and William Lyndwood his commissaries to see to the erection. All four men had previous connections with the bishop, so even if they were the king's choice Alnwick would have approved of them.²

He seems to have been more intimately involved with the original foundation of the king's college of St Mary and St Nicholas, Cambridge. The foundation deed of the college, dated 12 February 1441, acknowledged that the statutes had been composed by Bishop Alnwick, Bishop Aiscough, William Lyndwood, keeper of the privy seal, John Somerset, chancellor of the exchequer and John Langton, chancellor of the university, and granted them the right to amend them.³ It was perhaps in recognition of the bishop's assistance in founding the college that it was placed under the visitation of the bishop of Lincoln and his successors.⁴ In January 1444, Archbishop Stafford recognised their involvement in the foundation by commissioning the bishops of Lincoln and Salisbury to consecrate the altar and cemetery of the college.⁵

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1. *CPR*, 1436-41, p 455.
 2. *Bekynton Correspondence*, vol. I, pp 270-93 (Eugenius IV's bull of foundation, 28 January 1441).
 3. *CPR*, 1436-41, pp 521-3.
 4. H. Rashdall, *The Universities of Europe in the Middle Ages*, ed. F.M. Powicke & A.B. Emden, vol. III, *English Universities: Student Life* (Oxford, 1936), p 320. However, Perry is mistaken in his statement that 'A full account of the visitation of King's is to be found in Bishop Alnwick's register' ('Bishop Beckington', p 267).
 5. *LPL: Register Stafford*, f 12. Alnwick was in Cambridge the following 1 February (see Appendix VII, p 434), when he may have performed the task.

It was in his role as diocesan that Alnwick co-operated in the raising of Tattershall church into a college by Lord Cromwell.¹ The bishop's intimate involvement with his foundation is revealed by his letters to the pope, exemplified in Eugenius IV's bull of 16 October 1441, confirming the erection of the college.² The bishop informed Eugenius that on 14 July 1439 the king had licensed Cromwell, Cardinal Beaufort, Alnwick, Sir John Scrope, Sir Walter Hungerford, Walter Tailboys esq. and William Paston, patrons of the parish church of Tattershall,³ to erect it into a college of seven priests, six secular clerks, and six choristers, with an attached almshouse. The patrons then petitioned Alnwick (himself a patron) to erect the college, justifying their request with the, no doubt, formal claim that the causes of hospitality and divine service would thus be better served than they had been by the rectors of the church. He therefore summoned together all the interested parties, the dean and chapter of Lincoln, Richard Caudray, archdeacon of Lincoln, and Thomas Rysshorne, rector of Tattershall. With their consent, the erection took place in October 1440.

In 1447, Alnwick once again joined with Cromwell, this time together with several other leading magnates,⁴ to found a guild dedicated to St Christopher in the parish church of Thame. This guild was to be ruled by two or four wardens and to employ a chantry chaplain who was to celebrate for the king and queen, their progenitors and successors and for the brothers and sisters of the

1. See also *Visitations* II, p xxii.

2. *CPL*, vol. IX, pp 159-63.

3. On 4 July 1424, Cromwell received confirmation of a licence granted by Henry V to alienate his castle and manor at Tattershall to John Kemp, then bishop of Chichester, Master John Southam, Sir William Philip, Sir John Tiptoft, William Alyngton, James Strangways and Peter de la Pole, and for them to grant the same to Henry, bishop of Winchester, Thomas, bishop of Durham, William Alnwick, clerk, Sir John Scrope, Sir Walter Hungerford, Walter Tailboys esq and William Paston - i.e. the group (minus Bishop Langley who had just died) who erected the college (*CPR*, 1422-29, p 212).

4. See below, pp 321-2.

guild. It was also to support a hermitage in the parish dedicated to St John the Baptist. This hermit was to maintain the highway and pray for the founders' intentions.'

Bishop Alnwick was in less lofty company when he joined with John Doffeld clerk and ten married parishioners of Louth church to form a similar guild there in honour of the Virgin Mary.² The founding of these guilds and their attendant chantries came, noticeably, towards the end of Alnwick's life. Perhaps he was preparing for death by providing for prayers for his soul. It was just eighteen months before he died that he remembered his birthplace. On 6 July 1448 a licence was granted for Henry earl of Northumberland, William bishop of Lincoln, Sir Henry Percy lord Poynings and John Lematon, skilled in law, to found a chantry of two chaplains to celebrate daily at the altar of Our Lady within the chapel of St Michael's, Alnwick. One of these chaplains was to teach grammar to poor boys without payment.³

All these institutions were secular. Bishop Alnwick was, however, involved in one foundation that was to be of service to the regular clergy. At the general chapters of the Benedictine order held at Northampton in 1423 and 1426, the prior of the Benedictine students at Cambridge urged the necessity of giving proper support to such students and the advisability of their having a common hostel.⁴ As a result, it would seem, of these petitions, on 7 July 1428, a licence was issued, at the petition of Crowland abbey, to Thomas, bishop of Durham, William, bishop of Norwich, and John Hore of Childerley to grant to the abbey two messuages they held of the king in the parish of St Giles in Cambridge. A residence was to be built for the Benedictine monks studying canon law and theology at Cambridge 'who have hitherto

1. *CPR*, 1446-52, pp 180-1.

2. *Ibid.*, p 81. Licence was granted on 25 January 1447. Perhaps this John Doffeld was a relative of the theologian Thomas Duffeld who preached at Alnwick's visitations.

3. *Ibid.*, p 170. See also *Visitations II*, p xxiii.

4. Pantin, *Documents*, vol. II, pp 149, 173.

been compelled to dwell with secular persons in their inns'.¹ William Alnwick perhaps thus showed early in his episcopal career the concern for the education of the religious he was to exhibit during his visitations in the Lincoln diocese.²

This concern reflects the fact that those living in religious foundations within Bishop Alnwick's jurisdiction could not only be chastised as a result of his disciplinary proceedings, but could also benefit from his gracious acts. For example, he exhibited his sympathy for the poverty of Bardney Abbey, if not for the behaviour of its inmates, when he wrote to the abbot of Chertsey asking him to release Bardney from its due contribution to the general chapter because it was '*quasi collapsa et multum depauperata*'.³ Perhaps even more supportive was his concession in 1445 of an indulgence for those in the archdeaconry of Lincoln offering assistance to the fire-damaged Gilbertine priory at Bridge End.⁴ The bishop was similarly gracious in granting a licence for the celebration of mass within Lincoln college.⁵

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1. CPR, 1422-29, p 475. Later in the century the hall was known as Buckingham college, presumably through some connection with the Stafford family. In 1542, it was granted to Lord Audley for the establishment of Magdalene college (VCH Cambridge, vol. II, p 312).
 2. For example, at Newnham Priory in 1442 because 'certain canons...are so unlettered and almost witless that they barely read, and what they read they do not understand, and so are rendered profitless and unfit for study and contemplation', he ordered the prior to provide, and provide for, a suitable grammar teacher. At Thornton Abbey in 1440 he directed that the canons should be instructed in both logic and canon law and that the stipulated one canon per twenty be sent to university (Visitations II, pp 237-8, 382). J.T. Rosenthal, 'Lancastrian Bishops and Educational Benefaction', p 206, omits any mention of Alnwick's support of education beyond his testamentary bequests. If he has treated Alnwick's colleagues in the same way, he has, perhaps, seriously undervalued the contribution of the episcopal bench to fifteenth-century education. For a more rounded study, see H. Jewell, 'English Bishops as Educational Benefactors'.
 3. Pantin, Documents, vol. III, pp 109-10. The letter is dated 28 June with no year. Pantin suggests c. 1441-4, and is probably right.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 57 (1445). See also above, pp 161-2.
 5. Linc. Reg., f 76v (1442).

The ability of a bishop to grant or withhold such licences was fundamental to his maintenance of some influence over the affairs of religious establishments between visitations. This is illustrated by Alnwick's insistence in his visitation injunctions that superiors should apply to him for such a licence before performing a number of major acts.¹ Among the actions he frequently mentioned were granting corrodies, admitting boarders, cutting wood, admitting new inmates and alienating lands and rents - all actions which might irretrievably reduce the capital of a house. Injunctions of this kind were underlined for at least one house² by the threat of deprivation of the superior and excommunication of the disobedient that would be absolvable only by the bishop, unless the excommunicate was on the point of death. If his Lincoln register is to be believed, either Alnwick was not very generous in granting licences or the prioress and convent of Stixwold were the only religious to pay heed to such instructions.³ In 1440 and again in 1444, they were granted leave to farm out the fruits of three appropriated churches for a year; and in March 1444 they were given leave to receive a lady boarder.⁴ External sources reveal that the Augustinian canons of St Frideswide's priory, Oxford,⁵ and Osney abbey,⁶ obtained the bishop's confirmation of agreements they made with third parties. By contrast, Peterborough abbey would seem to have granted corrodies without obtaining the required licence even after more than one visitation from the bishop.⁷

Among those who did seek licences from the bishop was Brother Richard Burgh, canon of Thornholm, who was granted leave in March

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1. *Visitations* II, *passim*. Cf. *Provinciale*, pp 151-4, 201, 204-15.
 2. Daventry priory, 1442 (*Visitations* II, p 67).
 3. Alternatively, the registrar may not have felt it necessary to record all such grants, keeping record of only some for formulary purposes.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 34v, 46v.
 5. *The Boarstall Cartulary*, ed. H.E. Salter and A.H. Cooke, OHS, vol. LXXXVIII (1930), p 185.
 6. *The English Register of Osney Abbey, by Oxford, Written c.1460*, ed. A. Clark, EETS, original series, vols CXXXIII, CXLIV (one volume, 1907-13), pp 145, 161-2.
 7. CUL: Peterborough Ms. 2, ff 14, 21; if such licence was obtained it was not noted (cf. *Visitations* II, pp liv-iv, 286).

1442 to celebrate an annual for the dead, in his priory. Eighteen months later he was licensed to absent himself from the priory for three years and celebrate an annual in the archdeaconries of Lincoln and Stow.¹ Canon Burgh was, perhaps, in danger of losing his religious identity, as were those many religious who served the cure of souls in Bishop Alnwick's dioceses. Altogether thirty-six religious are known to have received benefices in the two dioceses. The nineteen instituted in the Norwich diocese included fifteen Augustinian canons and one Premonstratensian canon.² The most unusual case was perhaps that of Robert Aldeby, abbot of the Cistercian Sibton abbey, who was presented by his own house to a vicarage in 1427 on the strength of a papal licence.³ The seventeen men instituted in the diocese of Lincoln included three Gilbertine, five Austin and two Premonstratensian canons, five friars (one graduate Franciscan, two Austin, one Dominican and one unknown), and two of unknown obedience.⁴ Again the most surprising figures, the friars, had apostolic licences to hold benefices.⁵

Some of these benefices, such as the parish church of Ingham, were clearly very close to the house and so could be served without too much damage to religious life. In other cases, the institution to a benefice may have removed a troublesome brother from the house.⁶ On seven occasions, Alnwick himself collated the benefices, in all cases because of lapse of time. It may be that the poverty of benefices prevented their supporting a secular priest, making it necessary to provide a curate with some other means of support, as those belonging to religious houses would have had.⁷ On 24 May 1444, Alnwick indicated that he was not always

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 53v, 76v.
 2. The order of two men is not known (Norw. Reg., ff 6, 17v, 23, 27v, 33, 42v, 45, 54, 56, 58v, 60, 61-2, 64v, 66, 68v, 70v, 87, 90, 94v).
 3. *Ibid.*, f 23.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 37, 44v, 87, 87v, 97v, 98, 101v, 102, 105v-6, 113, 115, 139v, 152, 157v, 159v, 182v, 183, 183v, 185v, 187, 189.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 113, 139v, 157v.
 6. Robert Felbrigg, who had resigned as abbot of North Creaque, was presented by his house to the parish church of St Andrew's Ringstead on 31 December 1430 (Norw. Reg., f 94v).
 7. Norw. Reg., ff 54, 56, 64v; Linc. Reg., ff 87v, 187.

content to allow religious to serve cures, by instructing Henry Sutton, abbot of Wellow, to remove John Alesby from Clee church and replace him with a secular vicar within twenty days.¹

In allowing members of religious orders to serve cure of souls in this way, Bishop Alnwick was, however grudgingly, admitting them to a small part of the everyday administration of his dioceses. If the identification of two of his senior assistants, John Wygenhale and Thomas Balscot, as religious is inconclusive,² it is certain that he did call on some members of religious orders to assist him. Most prominent among these, of course, was his suffragan bishop, the Franciscan Robert Ryngman, bishop '*Gradensis*', who assisted him in the diocese of Norwich.³ He was the only religious who was constantly part of Alnwick's diocesan administration. However, others were called on for assistance from time to time. For example, early in his Lincoln episcopate, Alnwick wrote to the abbot of Westminster to ask him to force a notary who had escaped to his jurisdiction to complete a public instrument he had undertaken to make.⁴ While not prominent in Alnwick's every day administration, a large number of religious attended or assisted at the heresy proceedings in the diocese of Norwich 1428-31. The importance of the trial of the heresiarch William White on 13 September 1428 was signalled by the attendance of one Dominican, two Franciscans, four Austin friars and three Carmelites, together with the priors provincial of the Carmelite and Austin orders and the prior of Norwich cathedral.⁵ Attendants at other trials included the Benedictine William Worsted, prior of Norwich cathedral; the Carmelites John Thorp, John Keninghale, Peter St Faith and Henry Wychyngham; the Austin friar Clement Felmyngham;

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1. Linc. Reg., f 44v. Alesby had complained of being forced to serve the vicarage during Alnwick's visitation in 1440 (*Visitations* II, p 392), so perhaps Alnwick's sense of urgency should not be taken too seriously.
 2. See above, pp 108-9, 123.
 3. There is no evidence that William Gunwardby, bishop of Dunkeld, who served him at Lincoln, was a religious.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 30v. The commission is undated but surrounded by acts dating from March 1437.
 5. FZ, p 417.

the Franciscans John Elys, Robert Colman, John Paas, Richard Barton and Richard Norton; the Dominican John Gaysle; and Brother Edmund Snetisham, prior of the Austin canons of Coxford.¹

These religious, mainly graduate mendicants, were the kind of men who might receive licences to preach and administer penance under the constitution '*Super Cathedram*'.² The bishop had not only the power to appoint general penitentiaries but also the duty to appoint confessors for nunneries.³ While Alnwick was bishop of Norwich, eight men, including one Franciscan and two Austin friars, were appointed as confessors to the nunneries of Carrow, Blackborough, Redlingfield and Flixton between the years of 1430 and 1435.⁴ This episcopal task is also frequently illustrated in Alnwick's Lincoln visitation records. For example, in 1445 at Studley Priory it was 'prayed that the vicar of Bicester, who is reckoned to be of ripe judgement and age and sufficient knowledge, may be appointed as confessor to the convent, and in no wise an Oxford scholar, since it is not healthy that scholars from Oxford should have reason for coming to the priory'.⁵ In appointing suitable confessors, the bishop could keep some control over the condition of the convents between the dates of his personal visitations. However, the records indicate the difficulties he may have experienced in knowing when a new appointment was necessary.

Alnwick's involvement with the life of the religious of his dioceses was not only initiated by himself or his subjects. The initiative for his contact with them frequently came from outside the diocese. As its head, the bishop was the natural point of

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1. *Trials*, *passim*; Foxe, vol. III, pp 584-600. For St Faith, Thorpe, Colman, Keninghale, Felmyngham, Wychyngham and Elys, see *BRUC*, pp 502, 586; *BRUC*, vol. I, p 468; vol. II, pp 675, 1035-6; vol. III, pp 2045, 2172. Gaysle too was a doctor of theology (*Trials*, p 41).
 2. For the licensing of preachers and confessors, see above, pp 144-7. See also Haines, 'William Gray', p 446, for the religious as confessors and preachers in the diocese of Ely.
 3. *Provinciale*, p 211; Cheney, *Episcopal Visitations*, p 23 (Council of Oxford, 1222).
 4. Norw. Reg., ff 102v-103. One was Clement Felmyngham.
 5. *Visitations* II, p 362, See also *ibid.*, pp 105, 229, 348, 352.

contact for external authorities, lay or ecclesiastical, wishing to pass information or orders to the clergy of the diocese. In practice, the impetus for such contact came from three sources: the apostolic see, the archbishop of Canterbury and the royal government. It was, for example, via the bishop that the archbishop of Canterbury would, usually in response to an appeal from the king, summon the clergy of the southern province to a convocation at St Paul's cathedral, London. Such summons are found in the registers of both Abbot Curteys' and Bishop Alnwick. For example, on 4 July 1428, Alnwick certified to Archbishop Chichele the names of those he had summoned in response to the archbishop's instructions of 20 May. These included, as well as the prior and chapter of the cathedral, the four archdeacons, and two proctors of the clergy of the diocese, the following representatives of the religious foundations: the abbots of Bury St Edmunds, St Benet of Hulme, Sibton, Leiston, Langley and West Dereham; and the priors of Butley, Walsingham, Broomholm, Horsham, Wymondham, Binham, Castle Acre, West Acre, Ixworth, Thetford and Eye; and the dean of Stoke college.²

The usual result of such convocations was the grant of a subsidy to the king. It was up to the individual diocesans to appoint collectors of such taxation within their jurisdiction. As has been seen, this could be the cause of great friction between the bishops and the religious of their dioceses.³ Two entries on the patent rolls for 1448 indicate that this was not a dead issue, even towards the end of Alnwick's life. On 26 January, an exemption was granted to the abbot and convent of Croxton Abbey, Leicestershire and their successors 'from being made collectors of tenths, taxes, tallages or other quotas or subsidies whatsoever, though they be appointed by the bishop of Lincoln or any other diocesan'. Alnwick was clearly not prepared to accept this, for on 23 February there appeared, by order of the king, a 'grant for life to William, bishop of Lincoln, that, in any grant of a tenth or

1. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 106v-7 (1433).
2. Norw. Reg., ff 98v-99.
3. See above, pp 242-3, 249-52.

other subsidy or quota made by the clergy of the province of Canterbury, he shall freely use his right herein and depute such spiritual persons of his diocese for the collection thereof within his diocese and certify their names to the treasurer and barons of the Exchequer, as he shall think fit, any letters patent of discharge therefrom notwithstanding, and persons so deputed shall be held responsible herein and the bishop shall not be held to appoint any other'.¹ It would seem that the argument of fifteen years earlier was still alive.² Nevertheless, the appointment of religious as tax collectors was not always problematical. Even Abbot Curteys of Bury St Edmunds seems to have been happy to accept Alnwick's appointment of him as collector in 1436;³ and Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln court book contains cases illustrating the willingness displayed by the abbot of Sawtry and the prior of Huntingdon, not only to collect such subsidies but also to discipline those who failed to pay them.⁴ Clerical subsidies involved Bishop Alnwick not only in appointing collectors but also in supporting impoverished houses in their appeals to the king for exemption from paying taxes;⁵ responding to requests from the treasurer and barons of the exchequer for information about churches appropriated to houses liable to taxation;⁶ and responding to writs of *fleri facias* instructing him to ensure that the taxes owed by such houses were paid.⁷

Other royal writs which impelled the bishop and his officials to become involved with religious houses included writs of *venire facias*. One of these was used in 1427 by the prior of Castle Acre to force Thomas Belers, parson of Grimston, Norfolk, to respond

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1. CPR, 1446-52, p 129. Bishop Brouns obtained a similar grant in 1441 (NRO: REG 5/10, ff 90v-91).
 2. Cf. A. McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation', especially p 177.
 3. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 302-8. NRO: Colman Ms 8/89 is the record kept by the prior and convent of Thetford of their collecting activities in 1430.
 4. Court Book, pp 10, 12. Sawtry was a Cistercian abbey and Huntingdon an Augustinian priory.
 5. E.g. CPR, 1441-46, pp 367-8: an exemption granted 5 June 1445 to the prioress and convent of Markyate.
 6. E.g. Norw. Reg., f 97: on 6 February 1427, he informed them of churches held by the prioress and convent of Wix.
 7. *Ibid.*, f 112v.

on a plea of debt.¹ Also emanating from the royal chancery came writs commissioning Alnwick to take oaths for good behaviour from, among others, four abbots and nineteen priors of the diocese of Norwich.² It may have been as a result of a commission such as this that, on 20 May 1433, the bishop as justice of the peace took a number of bonds for good behaviour, including one of forty marks from Roger Ockham, prior of Hickling Augustinian priory, Norfolk.³

Although it was thus possible for a bishop to become involved with the religious foundations of his diocese through outside impetus, his most frequent contact with them arose from their position as patrons of a high proportion of the benefices within the dioceses. As is the case with all his fellow bishops on the episcopal bench, the most frequently occurring event recorded in Bishop Alnwick's registers is the institution of a priest presented to a benefice by that benefice's patron or patrons, often the superior and/or inmates of a conventual or collegiate church situated either within or outside the diocese. The conventual registers studied have all provided examples of letters of presentation sent by the abbot and convent to the bishop asking him to institute their nominee.⁴ There were few recorded inquests into the right of patronage of benefices whose patrons were religious foundations. This is probably because, as such houses were permanent corporations, patronage was unlikely to transfer to or from them as often as might happen in secular families with their inherent dangers of either dying out or changing through marriage alliances. Religious corporations might also be expected to keep better records than secular, and perhaps, illiterate, families.

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1. *Ibid.*, f 97. The bishop's vicar-general certified that he had been cited to respond on pain of excommunication.
 2. *CPR*, 1429-36, pp 370, 404-6 (1 May 1434). These and a large number of laymen were to take oaths not to maintain peace-breakers. Similar commissions were issued throughout the country.
 3. *Norw. Reg.*, f 96.
 4. *BL*: Add. Ms. 14848 (Bury), ff 39v, 41, 90v; Add. Ms. 25288 (Peterborough), f 160v; Add. Ms. 33450 (Ramsey), ff 4, 7. In addition, *Norw. Reg.* (f 82) contains a transcript of a letter from the prior and convent of Horkesley presenting their nominee to the parish church of Wiston, 20 March 1436.

Nevertheless, there is one such inquisition recorded in each of Alnwick's registers. In May 1429, Clement Denston, concluding an inquest into the vacancy at Risby, found that the church was vacant through his own resignation; that the abbot of Bury was the true patron but that the king had last presented because of a vacancy in the abbey; and (not surprisingly) that the presentee, William Aiscough, was a suitable candidate.¹ Similarly, in February 1449, an inquisition found that the patronage of Hatcliffe parish had transferred (via the king, the last presenter) from the priory of West Ravensdale to Southwell college, to which it was now appropriated.²

Even if the patron's right to present was established, there were instances when nominees were considered unsuitable. This may have threatened conflict between patrons and the bishop, as when the rector of Cotton was accused of paying the abbot of Bury forty marks for his presentation.³ Alternatively, the two may have acted together, as when Abbot Curteys asked Alnwick to remove Simon Trewe from the vicarage of Thurston where he had allowed the buildings to become dilapidated.⁴

Patrons and bishops also co-operated in uniting impoverished benefices. For example, on 5 May 1430, Abbot Curteys wrote to Bishop Alnwick informing him that one of the two portions of Dickleburgh church, which were in the abbey's gift, was too poor to support a rector, and requesting that he admit John Tybenham as rector of both portions.⁵ Bishop Alnwick acceded to his request on 23 August.⁶ It would seem that by this period bishops,

1. Norw. Reg., f 93.

2. Linc. Reg., ff 101v, 103v. In addition, the Peterborough Abbey register (CUL: Peterborough Ms 2, f 27v) contains the (undated) appointment of a proctor to appear before the bishop '*in negocia de et super iure patronatus ecclesie parochie de Oundell*'.

3. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 106.

4. *Ibid.*, ff 185-6. See above, p 178.

5. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 77v.

6. Norw. Reg., ff 41v, 100v-101. Both Alnwick's registers contain other examples of such unions: Barnby and Mutford, and Langhale and Kirkstead, with the consent of the prior and convent of Butley (*ibid.*, ff 46v, 47, 109v-111); (ctd on next page)

including Alnwick, were less happy about allowing religious houses to appropriate rectories in their patronage to their own use.¹ In June 1445, the king granted the abbot and convent of Bruern pardon of £8 yearly service for the church of Wootton without Woodstock 'until the said church be appropriated by the abbot or any of his successors, he having shown that neither the pope nor bishop will allow the said appropriation to be made notwithstanding the king's grant here to the house'.² Similarly, on 20 April 1433, Bishop Alnwick announced that, having noted in his recent visitation of the Dunwich deanery that the prior and Benedictine convent of Eye had taken all the fruits of St Peter's Dunwich and had neglected cure of souls, he had cited them to prove their title to appropriate the church. They had not appeared either before him or his commissary. He therefore declared that the appropriation was unlawful and that the church was vacant and had devolved to him; accordingly, he collated the rectory to John Saxmundham.³

When appropriation was allowed, bishops would make sure that sufficient income was provided for a secular vicar to serve the parish. Although presentation remained with the religious house, the bishop would sometimes reserve to himself the right of nomination to the patron, so effectively removing the real patronage into his own hands. Thus Alnwick is found writing to Abbot Curteys in 1432 to nominate Thomas Ryngrstede to the vicarage of Mildenhall;⁴ and instituting a number of vicars who had been presented to him by religious patrons, at his own nomination.⁵ His patronage was extended even further when the religious patrons

(ctd) St Mary Magdalene and Holy Trinity Blatherwycke, with the consent of the prior and convent of Launde Priory; and the three parts of Fulletby church, with the consent of the prior and convent of the Gilbertine priory at Bullington (Linc. Reg., ff 20-21v, 23).

1. Jacob, 'The English Concordat', p 355; but cf. Haines, 'John Carpenter', pp 30-1, which records seven appropriations permitted during this episcopate.
2. CPR, 1436-41, p 352. The king's grant is *ibid.*, p 438.
3. Norw. Reg., ff 107v-8.
4. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 85.
5. Norw. Reg., ff 9v, 14, 49, etc. These cases seem to be confined to the Norwich diocese.

either failed to provide an incumbent;¹ or presented unsuitable candidates,² or even granted the bishop temporary rights of patronage.³ Alnwick's concern that such vicars should have sufficient income to live on is exhibited in his augmentation of the vicarage of Old Newton with the co-operation of St Osyth's abbey in 1433,⁴ and his proceeding against Waltham Abbey, which was proving less amenable to the augmentation of All Saints Vicarage Hertford.⁵ By contrast, in 1444 he instructed the rector of St Mary's at Pontem, Stamford to resume paying a pension owed to the prior of St Leonard's.⁶ This may indicate that the Gilbertine canons of Alvingham who appealed to Alnwick to allow them to appropriate 'Germthorpe' parish church, may have succeeded in their appeal.⁷ Nevertheless, the prior and convent of Butley and the abbess and convent of Marham who resigned appropriated churches into the bishop's hands in 1433 were probably more in tune with both the prevailing mood and Alnwick's attitude towards appropriation.⁸

It is clear then that William Alnwick's episcopal office provided him with many opportunities for formal intercourse with the ecclesiastical foundations, secular and religious, within his diocese. Perhaps the very nature of the records offers less opportunity to view any more informal connections. The loan of the book by Garendon Abbey is one such instance.⁹ Similarly, Alnwick received four books from Robert Harowden, abbot of Westminster in

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1. On 10 December 1448 he collated the vicarage of the recently appropriated church of Oadby to William Foster because of the failure of the appropriators, Launde priory, to present within six months (Linc. Reg., f 162).
 2. On 25 January 1445, he collated the vicarage of Bengoe to Thomas Frytwell because the abbot and convent of Bermondsey had presented an illiterate (*ibid.*, f 167v).
 3. CUL: Peterborough Ms 2, f 5.
 4. Norw. Reg., f 117v.
 5. Linc. Reg., f 60 (no date). See also above, pp 168-9.
 6. Linc. Reg., f 48.
 7. *Ibid.*, f 77v.
 8. Norw. Reg., ff 61-2.
 9. See above, p 264.

January 1441.¹ No evidence has been found that he was ever received into confraternity in any of the abbeys he encountered.²

The religious house that seems to have been most noticeably friendly towards William Alnwick was Crowland abbey. According to the abbey's chronicle, it was Lord Dacre who in 1447 first approached the bishop to arbitrate between the parties on the question of the right to seigneurial jurisdiction in Whaplode.³ The abbot's attitude to Alnwick is indicated in his response:

'Shortly after this, the abbot's counsel was sent for; reasons and exhortations were adduced by the bishop to induce them with all confidence to leave the adjudication of the whole matter to his conscience, as they knew full well that he was a most sincere well-wisher of theirs, and would upon no account be willing to derogate from the liberties of the church. But why enlarge? What could the authority of such a man not obtain, the more especially as he was singularly distinguished among his fellow bishops of England for bearing the highest character and an unblemished name? And then, besides, if a person should think fit not to acquiesce in his wishes, who is there that could possibly escape from the intolerable indignation that would be manifested by his diocesan? Accordingly, they both obeyed, and for the sake of certainty bonds were entered into on both sides, in which they mutually promised that they would abide by his determination. As he was a man of the most consummate skill in the transaction of business, he first examined, with deliberate attention, the evidence adduced by the documents, and then, employing the most careful research, frequently held conferences on the matter with men well versed in the law. However, inasmuch as Latin words and expressions are often made to assume equivocal meanings, to the end that quibblers upon words might not at future times, by means of scruples arising from a sinister interpretation, render ambiguous and a cause of

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1. *PFC*, vol. V, pp 140-1. Emden (*BRUC*, p 11) describes this as a bequest, but in fact Harowden, who had resigned as abbot, was still alive in February 1441 (PRO: E 28/66/61-62). For details of the books, see Appendix VIII.
 2. This is especially noticeable in Abbot Curteys' register where Alnwick is a prominent absentee from the lists of those granted confraternity (BL: Add. Ms. 18848, *passim*).
 3. *Ingulph's Chronicle*, trans. and ed. Riley, pp 405-6; *Rerum Anglicarum Scriptorum Veterum*, ed. W. Fulman (Oxford, 1684), p 522.

dissension that which was done with a pious intent, the venerable prelate ordered the results of his arbitration to be set forth in the English language...''

The parties bound themselves to obey the award on 17 February 1448, and the bishop presented it on 21 September.² The abbot's confidence in the bishop was well founded. Alnwick's decision supported the abbey almost completely. However, Dacre does not seem to have protested and the tripartite indenture was sealed by all three parties, each keeping a copy in their archives.

Of course, these words in praise of William Alnwick were written in the knowledge that he had judged in the abbey's favour. Nevertheless, the abbot may already have felt kindly towards the bishop, who had supported the foundation of the Benedictine house at Cambridge. Nor should it be forgotten that even John Whethamstede changed his opinion of the bishop's worth. Bishop Alnwick's own feelings about the religious houses with which he came into contact are harder to gauge. He would seem to have been a stern disciplinarian who was equally as tenacious of his privileges as the most litigious exempt abbot. Nevertheless, there were a number of foundations that had reason to be grateful to him.

His support of educational foundations while alive has already been touched on.³ He continued such support in death by his bequests to secular clerks from his dioceses attending both universities.⁴ The universities were not the only ecclesiastical communities to benefit from his will. Hospitals and almshouses were to receive support from the residue of his estate.⁵ This may have been conventional piety, as may have been the bequest of

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1. *Ingulph's Chronicle*, ed. Riley, pp 405-6. Might it not also have been because Dacre was more likely to understand English than Latin? The last few lines are redolent of Alnwick's feelings about the Lincoln cathedral chapter's response to his *Novum Registrum*.
 2. The English text is recorded in *ibid.*, pp 406-10; Linc. Reg., ff 24-25; BL: Add Ms 5845, pp 192-5.
 3. See above, pp 136, 269-73.
 4. *Visitations II*, pp xxv, xxvii.
 5. *Ibid.*, p xxviii.

twenty shillings to each of the houses of the four mendicant orders in his two cities of Norwich and Lincoln,¹ and the money left to 'men of religion' attending his obsequies.² However, real affection is probably displayed by his bequests to Norwich cathedral priory, as is the 26s 8d left to the Gilbertine priory of St Katherine outside Lincoln where he probably spent the night before his enthronement in Lincoln.³ Loyalty towards his place of origin is, no doubt, reflected in his bequest of 100s to the abbot and canons of Alnwick abbey together with '*unum par peluim parvarum de argento cum floribus infundis ipsarum anamellatis et fistula in unius latere dictarum peluim*' for their high altar. It may have been recognition of assistance given during his heresy trials by members of their order, as well as local affection, which prompted his 40s bequest to the Carmelites of Hulne, three miles from Alnwick.⁴

In leaving such bequests, William Alnwick showed that while he was as willing as any of his fellows on the episcopal bench to do battle with the exempt monasteries where their claimed exemptions clashed with his perceived jurisdiction, he was not in any way opposed to the religious orders *per se*. Indeed, in exercising his disciplinary function to the full, as exhibited by both his visitation records and those contained in his episcopal registers, he was doing his utmost to preserve and strengthen the religious houses and collegiate churches within his jurisdiction. It may be that the chance survival of so many relevant records has unfairly emphasised his achievement at the expense of his fellow bishops. It is doubtful that many bishops were more conscientious than he was in his dealings with the ecclesiastical foundations he encountered.

1. *Ibid.*, p xxvi.

2. *Ibid.*, p xxv.

3. *Ibid.*, p xxvi. See also above, pp 28, 79-80.

4. *Visitations II*, pp xxvi-xxvii.

VI. WILLIAM ALNWICK AND THE POLITICS OF HIS AGE, 1426-49

William Alnwick is most well known for his episcopal activities; the sheer quantity of his diocesan records make this inevitable. However, the consideration only of his work as a diocesan would give an incomplete picture of the man. He was, as his critic Piero da Monte stated, '*verum regiis precibus exaltatus*'. Those aware of his conscientious service to his dioceses might consider that da Monte was unfair in his judgement that Alnwick was '*regias leges magis quam divinas et ecclesiasticas servaturum*'.¹ Nevertheless, when da Monte was writing (c. 1438) Alnwick had yet to retire fully from royal service. In order to place his achievements as a diocesan bishop in their proper context, it is necessary to consider his role in royal government and what part he played in the political events of his day.²

1. A Bishop as Keeper of the Privy Seal, 1426-1432

William Alnwick probably owed his bishopric to his position as keeper of the privy seal, an office he had occupied since shortly after the accession of the infant Henry VI. His promotion to the episcopate from this post was in keeping with recent practice. Where he was unusual was in continuing in office for a further six years after his consecration.³ Between 1399 and 1418, Bishops Clifford, Bubwith, Wakering and Ware had all resigned the office shortly after their consecrations. John Kemp continued as keeper for over a year after his provision to Rochester in 1418, but it was William Alnwick who finally broke the convention that the

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1. Haller, *Piero da Monte*, p 74. For Alnwick's pre-episcopal service to the crown, see Appendix I.
 2. For the careers of other political bishops, see, for example, Aston, *Thomas Arundel*; Storey, *Thomas Langley*; Jacob, 'Thomas Brouns' and 'John Stafford'. Heath (*Church and Realm*, p 206) has described such men as 'amphibious...creatures who swam in spiritual waters and walked on royal lands'.
 3. 'Every keeper of the privy seal could expect promotion to a bishopric, but it was a convention that he should resign once he had been consecrated; the privy seal was considered to be beneath the episcopal dignity' (Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 11).

keepership was unworthy of a bishop.' According to Gascoigne '*iste malus usus retinendi curatos in officiis regum reprehenditur a sancto Thoma Cantuariensi, qui factus episcopus resignavit officium Cancellariae Angliae*'.² However, it would be wrong to castigate Alnwick or any other clerical officer for their continued service to the crown. As has been seen, it was possible for bishops to manage their episcopal duties through a combination of personal residence in their diocese out of term-time and the employment of vicars general.³ Furthermore, it is not certain that the conscience of a well-intentioned bishop should direct him exclusively to diocesan affairs. Davies makes the point that Alnwick seemed concerned to devote himself to his diocese after retiring from office.⁴ It is, however, doubtful that he resigned the office voluntarily,⁵ and his conscience may well have compelled him to do all in his power to ensure the smooth functioning of the government of the heir of his patron Henry V.

The office of keeper of the privy seal⁶ had developed out of the thirteenth-century position of controller of the wardrobe. It had become, by the early fifteenth century, 'the key pin in the administration'.⁷ The dispersal and destruction of the records of the privy seal office make it a difficult institution to examine.⁸

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1. A.L. Brown, 'The Privy Seal in the Early Fifteenth Century' Oxford D.Phil. (1954), pp 330-2; Davies, Ph.D., p 633; *HBC*, p 95.
 2. *Locí e Libro*, p 21. Gascoigne was not referring directly to Alnwick; John Kemp appears to have been his main target but Alnwick was definitely one of the group criticised.
 3. Recent studies on John Kemp have demonstrated that even this favourite target of Gascoigne's criticism exerted considerable energy in attempting to spend time in his archdiocese (Nigota, 'John Kempe'; Witchell, 'John Kemp').
 4. Davies, Ph.D., p 633.
 5. See below, pp 305-7.
 6. Much of what follows, on the development and running of the privy seal office is based on A.L. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', and S.B. Chrimes, *An Introduction to the Administrative History of Medieval England* (Oxford, 1952).
 7. Chrimes, *Administrative History*, p 206.
 8. A point made in the *Guide to the Contents of the Public Record Office*, vol. II, *State Papers and Departmental Records* (1963), pp 237-8, and in various class lists of the PRO; and by A.L. Brown 'The Privy Seal', pp 8-13 and *passim*.

Nevertheless, it is possible to gain some idea of how the department worked. Its practices were probably well established by the time of Alnwick's keepership. Apart from his continuation as keeper after obtaining his bishopric, in itself, perhaps, a reflection of the position's enhanced status, no startling innovation has been observed during his term of office. Innovator or not, for ten years William Alnwick stood at the head of a department which has been described (more than once) as the 'great clearing house for all other branches of the administration'.¹ An adult king had a number of formal and informal methods of instructing his officials to act, one of which was to use warrants sealed with the privy seal. During a minority, such as the prolonged one at the beginning of Henry VI's reign, such methods as the direct order, the royal sign manual and signet letters, of their nature personal to the king, could not be used. In 1422, possibly against the last wishes of Henry V, a council of regency had been established which, although conceding a place of honour to the dead king's brothers Humphrey, duke of Gloucester and, while he was in England, John, duke of Bedford, denied either a position of overall power as regent.² The royal council, which had no seal of its own until the sixteenth century,³ needed a means of communicating with royal officials, and so the privy seal became its principal instrument for relaying instructions based on its decisions.⁴

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1. V.H. Galbraith, *An Introduction to the Use of the Public Records* (2nd edn, 1952), p 29. See also Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 11.
 2. This is a question much discussed by all historians of the period, possibly most conveniently by J.S. Roskell, 'The Office and Dignity of Protector of England, with Special Reference to its Origins', *EHR*, vol. LXVIII (1953) pp 193-234, reprinted and partially updated in his *Parliament and Politics in Late Medieval England*, 3 vols (1981-3), vol. I.
 3. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', p 42.
 4. This is quite apparent from the surviving records of the council, notably those printed by Nicolas in *PPC* and the *PRO* series: C 81 (Chancery, Warrants for the Great Seal) and E 28 (Exchequer, Treasury of Receipt, Council and Privy Seal Records). More often than not memoranda of council meetings record a resultant privy seal warrant or letter.

The privy seal's most important function was in issuing warrants to instruct the two great departments of chancery and exchequer to act. It could be used to instruct the chancellor to issue any document that might be sealed by the great seal, from summons to parliament to declarations of war. Most often these warrants concerned grants to private parties, either as a result of the royal initiative, or more often, of a petition from the grantee.¹ Two kinds of warrants were issued to the exchequer: those addressed to the treasurer and barons, instructing them to act with reference to the accounts; and those addressed to the treasurer and chamberlains, instructing them to issue payment of some kind or, less often, to release some item of value held in the treasury of receipt.² In addition, the king's minority probably increased the need for formal warrants for royal household officers, who might normally expect to receive their orders by word of mouth. Consequently, the work of the privy seal in issuing such warrants increased.³ Moreover, by the early fifteenth century, the privy seal warrant had taken over some of the work that had previously been performed by means of letters close sealed under the great seal, in communicating with local officials such as sheriffs and escheators;⁴ those serving further afield, for example in the administration of Calais and Gascony;⁵ or simply communicating as necessary with the king's subjects.⁶

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1. For examples of such warrants issued during Alnwick's keepership, see *PPC*, vol. III, pp 110, 181, 192, 300-1; for the privy seal and chancery, see Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 125-53.
 2. For example, *PPC*, vol. III, pp 39, 146 (treasurer and chamberlains to hand over royal jewels to Bishop Beaufort as pledge for a loan); PRO: E 28/49, 16 Feb 1427 (warrant for payment to Bedford as captain of Calais. Many E 28 items are, of course, mainly draft, warrants of this kind). For the connections between the privy seal office and exchequer, see Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 154-200.
 3. For example, *PPC* vol. III, p 58 (5 March 1423, instruction to keeper of great wardrobe to deliver bed of Henry V to duke of Exeter). For the privy seal's relations with the household and great and privy wardrobes, see Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 206-14.
 4. Cf. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 201-26.
 5. *Ibid.*, pp 242-7.
 6. For example, licences to elect bishops were often issued under it (see e.g. PRO: E 28/39, 6 March 1423, licence to elect new bishop of Carlisle).

Those in receipt of temporary royal commissions also received their instructions via the privy seal. As a result of the seal's origins in the wardrobe, it was used both to seal indentures with military commanders and to store the royal half of the indenture.¹ When the king was using more peaceful means of confronting his opponents, the instructions of his ambassadors were frequently sealed with the privy seal, as well as the great seal, and their safe-conducts were often sealed with it alone. Indeed the privy seal office seems to have had an intimate relationship with royal diplomacy. Not only did its officers serve on embassies,² but also many of the crown's diplomatic documents were written in the office. The privy seal was, moreover, often used to seal letters to important correspondents such as other royal princes and the pope.³ The privy seal office was not, however, the place where diplomatic policy was formulated. It 'was essentially a secretariat' carrying out royal policy in the production and storage of diplomatic documents.⁴

Although the privy seal office's own archives have now been dispersed, it is clear that during the period when William Alnwick was keeper it was used to store not only its own records but also such documents as were (presumably) not considered precious enough to be kept in the treasury.⁵ Such usage presupposes a fixed location for the office. Although the keeper might accompany the court on its travels, there was, by the fifteenth century, an established location for the office at Westminster.⁶ The keeper

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1. Some examples during Alnwick's term of office are in *PPC*, vol. III, pp 21, 54, 207-8, 303-4.
 2. For William Alnwick's own diplomatic career see below, pp 325-8, and Appendix I.
 3. Examples of such letters issued during Alnwick's term of office are in *PPC* vol. III, pp 178-9 (31 Oct 1425 to the duke of Bavaria); vol. IV, pp 9-10 (15 December 1429, letters to the pope for the translation of Bishop Cauchon). For the privy seal and diplomacy, see Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 267-84.
 4. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 283-4.
 5. References to records stored in the privy seal office include *PPC*, vol. III, pp 21, 192, 207-8, 281-2.
 6. For what follows see Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 285-322.

was assisted by a group of clerks, some of whom might spend a lifetime in the office. One such clerk, during Alnwick's own period of tenure, was the poet Hoccleve. When Alnwick first entered office, his senior assistant was Robert Frye, secondary to the keeper from 1420 until at least 1425, a period in which he combined this office with that of clerk of the council. The tradition that a senior privy seal clerk acted as clerk to the royal council reflected the intimate connection between the council and the privy seal office.¹ Frye's successor as clerk of the council was Richard Caudray,² who continued in office after Alnwick's resignation. Frye was replaced as secondary by another senior ecclesiastic, and Alnwick's own successor as keeper, William Lyndwood.³ These would all have been able assistants to the keeper, though bearing in mind the other positions they held, the bulk of the work was probably undertaken by lesser men.

William Alnwick was expected as keeper to provide a house for the clerks and servants of the office. Keepers normally used the town house of a bishop,⁴ and Alnwick may well have housed them in the bishop of Norwich's house at Charing Cross. However, the frequent mention of the hospital of St James at Westminster in his episcopal acts⁵ would seem to indicate that he normally employed this hospital, of which he had been warden, as the *hospicium* for the privy seal office. The chancellor, Archbishop Kemp, also frequently resided at St James' hospital, so perhaps the privy seal and chancery clerks shared a house during this period.⁶ Alnwick's

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1. On 4 February 1424, Alnwick himself acted as scribe of the council's acts (PRO: E 28/44).
 2. For some discussion of his career and connections with Alnwick see above, p 97, and Appendix I, pp 363, 368.
 3. Lyndwood became secondary in March 1430 'probably at Chichele's persuasion' (Davies, Ph.D., p 416). Thus the three senior men in the office were all Cambridge graduates.
 4. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 292-3. Cf. Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 12.
 5. See above, p 91, and Appendix VII.
 6. Nigota, 'John Kempe', p 281. In his itinerary for Kemp, Nigota has conflated all places in London and Westminster to 'London' (*ibid.*, pp 541-64) so it is not possible to check easily whether Alnwick and Kemp were ever in residence at the hospital at the same time. (ctd on next page)

salary as keeper of twenty shillings per day, with no additional payment for attending council meetings,¹ does not seem an enormous amount to sustain a household of some thirty to forty clerks and office servants. Doubtless Alnwick, as keeper, took some share in the fees of the office, which were the sole income, barring the profits of a few minor benefices, of the clerks.² He may also have profited from inducements paid to him for his good offices.

It is not easy to see how influential Bishop Alnwick was as keeper. His own power to move the seal in his care was strictly limited. He seems to have been able to respond automatically to requests for safe conduct for the movement of prisoners;³ from shipmasters requesting letters directed to Henry V's executors for the payment of debts;⁴ and to regular requests from the treasurer of the household for warrants instructing sheriffs to pay local household officers.⁵ This was, however, a very limited authority. The great majority of the privy seal letters and warrants issued during the minority, and hence during his term of office, resulted from direct order of the council, of which, of course, he was a member. The keeper's status was definitely inferior to that of the chancellor and treasurer, with few powers other than of executing the wishes of king and council. Nevertheless, although one should not over-emphasise the powerfulness of his position, it should not be dismissed either. The St Albans chronicler could write when considering his abbot's quarrel with the bishop in the 1430's that the prior and convent of Binham were terrified because of Alnwick's high status '*magnus...cum omnibus regni proceribus, quia*

(ctd) They were, of course, often in London together. Bishop Waynflete also used the hospital (Davis, 'William Waynflete', p 23). See also Rosser, 'Medieval Westminster', pp 321-40.

1. The payment of his salary is recorded in PRO: Exchequer of Receipt: Issue Rolls (E 403): E 403/677-700. His yearly receipts seem to have been very haphazard, varying between £288 (1426-7) and £435 (1428-9), thus evening out over time.
2. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', pp 292-308.
3. For example, PPC, vol. III, p 78.
4. PRO: E 28/43, especially 27 January 1424.
5. E 28/47-49.

dudum, dum Custos Privati Sigilli fuerat, erat ipsis benevolus maximam que benevolentiam in officio exhibebat'.¹ This implies that the keeper's position carried some influence.

Part of that influence was, no doubt, due to the keeper's presence *ex officio* on the royal council. The records of the council that survive for this period,² present a few problems in determining the frequency of Alnwick's attendance at meetings. In the first few years of the minority the scribe of the council took care to list the names of the members in attendance on the dorse of any items under consideration. Among the ordinances for the council agreed in the 1424 parliament had been the rule that when a bill was presented to the council 'the names of th'assenteurs to be wryten of thar owen hand, in the same Bille'.³ In theory this should ease the process of ascertaining who was present. In the case of William Alnwick it causes difficulties. During the entire period from his becoming bishop of Norwich to his loss of the privy seal⁴ his signature only appears on one occasion.⁵ This might lead to the conclusion that either he was consistently absent or that he disagreed with every decision made in council! Fortunately, the scribe continued to record the names of the members present on the dorse of at least some of the council's records. Frequently the keeper's presence is noted on the back of a document where his signature has not appeared.⁶ Taking these difficulties into

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1. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 300.
 2. Primarily those printed in *PPC*, vols III and IV; PRO: C 81/1544-1545; E 28/48-53, plus a few items recorded in *Foedera* and *RP*.
 3. *RP*, vol. IV, p 201; *PPC*, vol. III, pp 148-52.
 4. In effect from the beginning of 5 Henry VI (September 1426) to half way through 10 Henry VI (February 1432).
 5. PRO: E 28/48 (6 December 1426). In this instance, his signature appears as a notorial mark attesting to the fact that privy seal letters had been made. He may have been acting as secretary to the council on that day.
 6. Some examples of this are E 28/48 (7 Dec 1426); E 28/49 (16 Feb 1427); PRO: C 81/1554/70 (9 May 1427), etc. Many examples might be cited. His rare signing of bills may indicate that the keeper's assent was not deemed necessary for the council's acts. Alternatively, as the majority of these acts resulted in the issue of privy seal warrants, it may be that his sealing of such warrants was deemed sufficient evidence of his assent.

account, and discarding the dates for which there is no complete indication of who was present, it is possible to gain an impression of his level of attendance. The sources available indicate that, as keeper, except for the periods when he was abroad,¹ Bishop was a faithful attender of council.² This was despite the fact that on no occasion when fees for the council were discussed was William Alnwick allocated anything in addition to his salary as keeper.³ His actual contribution to the council is difficult to assess. He is never, in this period, recorded as having expressed any opinion on any matter, although his memory was once tapped for his knowledge of Henry V's plans.⁴ Moreover, he never seems to have acted as chairman of the council in the absence of the chancellor.⁵ One can only guess that the abilities he exhibited as bishop were also considered useful by the more powerful lords of the council - an assumption that receives some confirmation from the sheer length of his tenure of office.

Consideration of Henry VI's minority council is seldom complete without some assessment of the role of faction, and the part played by the quarrels between Henry Beaufort, bishop of Winchester and Humphrey, duke of Gloucester. The antipathy that seems to have existed between these two magnates even before Henry VI's accession provoked some of the more dramatic crises of the period. It is often assumed that all other lords were irretrievably lined up behind one or other, and that Cardinal Beaufort was continually

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1. For the summer of 1427 and from May 1431 to February 1432 (see below, pp 325-6; 303-5).
 2. Davies stated (Ph.D., p 640) that Alnwick was seldom present at royal council meetings after May 1429. In fact, when the sources are adequate, Alnwick can usually be shown to have been present unless he had good reason for being elsewhere. See Table IX.
 3. *PPC*, vol. III, pp xix, 154-8, 278-80; PRO: E 28/48 (10 Dec 1426); *RP*, vol. IV, p 374 (March 1431 when both the chancellor (Archbishop Kemp) and the treasurer (Lord Hungerford) were allocated such fees).
 4. See below, pp 297-8.
 5. Although there is some slight indication that a meeting was held at his house at Charing Cross in February 1430 (E 28/51, 18 February). This document, which is torn, may simply record that privy seal letters were made there.

plotting to advance himself at Gloucester's expense.' It is, however, a 'serious over-simplification to suggest that the council itself was riven by faction'.² G.L. Harriss has recently restressed the theory that Cardinal Beaufort was only the most notable of a large body of lords which believed that, during a minority, government should devolve to the lords, and was highly suspicious of Gloucester's continually revealed ambitions for overall power.³ It is hard, especially in view of Gloucester's Hainault adventures, which almost singly destroyed the Burgundy alliance that had been so carefully nurtured by Bedford and Beaufort, not to consider that those who opposed him formed the '*major et sanior pars*' of the royal council.

Where did Bishop Alnwick stand in relation to all this? He has been described as a 'partisan' of Gloucester and Archbishop Chichele.⁴ The facts, while allowing for the undoubted respect that he had for the archbishop, would indicate otherwise. He was, with Bishops Langley, Morgan and Stafford, the dukes of Exeter and Norfolk, Earl Stafford, and Lord Cromwell, one of those chosen to arbitrate between Gloucester and Beaufort in 1426,⁵ which would

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1. The latter assumption may perhaps owe something to the anti-papal views of nineteenth-century historians prejudiced against the very idea of an English cardinal. For Shakespeare's influential picture of the evil cardinal hounding 'Good Duke Humphrey' to the grave, see especially *Henry VI Part II*, Act III, Scene I.
 2. A. Tuck, *Crown and Nobility, 1272-1461, Political Conflict in Late Medieval England* (Oxford, 1986), p 265.
 3. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, especially p 121: 'If Beaufort was beginning to gather support it was as much for his commitment to the principle of conciliar authority and his financial and diplomatic skills as by his organisation of a following within the council'. For Gloucester's character, see Roskell, 'Protector of England', p 199, and K.H. Vickers, *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. A Biography* (1907), especially p 88.
 4. Betcherman, 'The Making of Bishops in the Lancastrian Period', pp 408-9. This paper credits faction with an extraordinary degree of influence in episcopal promotion. Davies, 'Martin V and the English Episcopate' is a much more judicious examination of episcopal appointments during the minority, but it is, nevertheless, coloured by Betcherman's view that Alnwick was unsympathetic to Beaufort. See especially p 340.
 5. *RP*, vol. IV, p 297; C.L. Kingsford, *Chronicles of London* (Oxford, 1905), pp 76-95.

seem to indicate at least a respectable neutrality.¹ His attitude to Beaufort's cardinalate and appointment as legate to preach the Bohemian crusade is hard to gauge. He did not publicly greet the cardinal on his arrival in London in September 1428.² However, it is possible that too much has been made of this fact. By September, many of the councillor bishops would have retired to their dioceses after the summer meeting of convocation.³ Alnwick himself was certainly in his diocese.⁴ It is, moreover, likely that he greeted Beaufort during the latter's progress through the Norwich diocese.⁵ Bishop Alnwick was one of the lords who managed to bring about the inconclusive settlement to the crisis which arose in April 1429 concerning Beaufort's right to retain his bishopric of Winchester and preside at that year's garter ceremony.⁶ In short, there is no evidence at all that he sided with Gloucester on any of the major issues of the day.

Although one cannot easily assign William Alnwick to a faction, it is possible, to some extent, to see where his loyalties lay. In common with many of his contemporaries, his devotion seems to have been to the memory of his former master Henry V and, because of this, to maintaining the position of his son. His presence at Henry's deathbed was remembered on at least two occasions. The first was in February 1427, when he, the earl of Stafford and Lords

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1. There is no indication that the two parties chose their own representatives to arbitrate, as was normal in such cases.
 2. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 26; 'Only one bishop - his creature [in fact, his nephew!], Neville of Salisbury - was present at his state entry into London' (K.B. MacFarlane, 'England: The Lancastrian Kings, 1399-1461', pp 363-417 in *The Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. VIII, *The Close of the Middle Ages*, ed. C.W. Previté-Orton and Z.N. Brooke (Cambridge, 1936), p 392).
 3. A point made by Nigota, 'John Kempe', p 233. He adds that Bishop Gray of London 'a logical greeter' had left London on a mission to Rome.
 4. See Appendix VII, pp 414-5.
 5. Beaufort was at Walsingham on 22 September and at Bishop's Lynn by 1 October (Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 178). It may have been as a result of this contact that Beaufort certified to Abbot Exeter Alnwick's decision to delay his inquisition at Bury St Edmunds. See above p 240.
 6. *PPC*, vol III, p 323.

Bourchier and Hungerford were questioned regarding Henry's plans for the future conquest of France. They replied 'that it may well be thought of reson havynge regard to the great matere of sorowe and hevynese that thei had at that tyme thei were not disposed to applye their remembrances to.. reporte the same words that the king declared...', but were able to confirm Bedford's belief that Henry had wished that Bedford 'shudde drawe hym doune into Normandie and kepe that contraye as wel as the remanent of his conquest on the best wise that God wolde yeve hym grace with the revenuez and profitts therof and do therwith as he wolde do with his oune'.¹ Similarly, he was one of the lords whose memory was appealed to in the October parliament of that year by the late king's servants who were petitioning for confirmation of the pardons Henry had provided on his deathbed.² It may have been his position as keeper of the privy seal that prompted the instruction that Henry's will be handed over to him for safe-keeping.³ However, it was probably his association with and loyalty to Henry V, as well as his known abilities as a royal councillor, which prompted the request that he be appointed to the king's council in France.⁴

William Alnwick was only one of 'a solid core of devoted servants of Henry V who continued to protect the fortunes of his son'.⁵ Although the official records of royal government reveal little of Bishop Alnwick's political views, some indication may be gained from his association with other notables of his day, including many of his fellow councillors. One might expect that his closest connections would have been with his early patrons Archbishop Chichele and Bishop Langley, Lord Scrope, the brother of

1. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 247-8.

2. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 324-5.

3. *PPC*, vol. III, pp x, 190; *RP*, vol. IV, pp 299-300. As late as 1444, a messenger was sent to him in his castle at Sleaford in an attempt to retrieve the will (PRO: E 28/75/57; Exchequer of Receipt: Writs and Warrants for Issues (E 404): E 404/61/210: request and warrant for payment to William Gedney for riding to Alnwick, Hungerford, John Leventhorp and the bishop of Bath - probably Beckington although Stafford might make more sense).

4. 9 April 1437, by Louis of Luxembourg (*PPC*, vol. V, pp 6-7).

5. R.A. Griffiths, *The Reign of Henry VI. The Exercise of Royal Authority, 1422-1461* (1981), p 38.

his first and dearest patron, and Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, the local lord of his home town. With Bishop Langley, certainly, Alnwick would seem to have remained on friendly terms. In 1428, they joined in founding the hostel for Benedictine monks at Cambridge which had been sought by Crowland Abbey.¹ It seems likely too that relations with the archbishop continued to be cordial although there is little positive indication either way. It was not to be until late in life that Alnwick was to join with the earl of Northumberland in founding a grammar school in their home town.² There is no indication at all, in the early part of the reign, of any form of friendly relations with John Scrope, who is one of the few councillors to be positively identified as the duke of Gloucester's ally throughout the minority. The absence of any connection with Scrope would seem to confirm Alnwick's indifference to Duke Humphrey's pretensions, to put it no stronger. Furthermore, his estrangement from Gloucester is perhaps confirmed by his joining in 1430 in the consecration of Marmaduke Lumley, whose elevation to the bishopric of Carlisle had been vigorously opposed by Gloucester and Scrope.³ A further break with his Scrope connections seems to be indicated by his friendship with Thomas Beaufort, duke of Exeter, the man who may well have been responsible for the summary execution of Archbishop Scrope.⁴ Exeter appointed Alnwick supervisor of his will, together with Bishop Morgan and Lords Bouchier and Hungerford.⁵ Alnwick's affection for the duke is further indicated by his gift to Lincoln cathedral of a processional cross engraved '*orate pro animabus domini Thome Bewford...*'.⁶ During this period he was made

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1. CPR, 1422-9, p 475. See also above, pp 272-3. For Langley's political neutrality, see Storey, *Thomas Langley*, pp 46-51.
 2. See above, p 272.
 3. Borthwick Institute, York, Register 19 (John Kempe, 1426-52), f 17. The date of this consecration causes some problems because Alnwick apparently attended it in Canterbury on 16 April, having been ordaining in his cathedral on the preceding day (Norwich Reg., f 129; cf. *Visitations* II, p 406). One of the records must surely be wrong although both seem convincing. For Lumley, see R.L. Storey, 'Marmaduke Lumley'.
 4. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 29. For Langley's share in this, see Storey, 'Thomas Langley', p 17.
 5. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, pp 355-64.
 6. *Monasticon*, vol. VI, p 1280.

supervisor of the wills of three more men who had given service to Henry V: Thomas, earl of Salisbury;¹ John Wodehouse esq;² and Sir Thomas Erpingham.³ Wodehouse and Erpingham may well have chosen Alnwick as much for his position as their local diocesan (both requested burial in Norwich cathedral) as for any other reasons.

The records of land transactions give some indication of the bishop's connections with other lords during this period (1426-32). His closest episcopal colleagues would seem to have been the chancellor, Archbishop John Kemp, who had acted as his patron in earlier years and had pressed for his elevation to the episcopate.⁴ His closest relations with the lay councillors would seem to have been with Lords Walter Hungerford, John Tiptoft and Ralph Cromwell.⁵ Of these, Alnwick was perhaps most intimately connected with Cromwell.⁶ In 1424, Alnwick had become feoffee of Lord Cromwell's castle at Tattershall, an association which was to culminate in the erection of Tattershall College in later years.⁷ All these men were also in friendly contact with Cardinal Beaufort,⁸ and it is by association rather than by much direct

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, pp 390-5. He left Alnwick 40 marks.
 2. *Ibid.*, pp 436-44. He left '*venerabili domino meo domino Norwicensi episcopo unum tablet de Trinitate de auro quod habui de predecessore suo*'. Alnwick was later to confirm the annulment of his daughter's marriage to Thomas Tuddenham (see above, pp 189-90).
 3. *Ibid.*, pp 380-1. It was 'for the grete and entier affection and inward trust which I have in right honorable and reverent fader in God maister William Alnewyk bissop of Norwich I him devyse, ordeigne and make by this present script surveour...'
 4. Both recent studies of Kemp (Nigota, pp 194-5; Witchell, p 22) note that in January 1426 Kemp wrote to William Swan in Rome to advance Alnwick's claims. Both also regard Alnwick as one of Kemp's major friends.
 5. Multifarious land transactions and enfeoffments concerning the five men (among many others) are recorded in: *A Descriptive Catalogue of Ancient Deeds in the PRO*, vol. IV (1902), pp 108-10, 139, 199-200; *CCR 1422-9*, p 383; *CCR 1429-35*, pp 43-4, 50-3.
 6. R.L. Friedrichs ('The Career and Influence of Ralph Lord Cromwell, 1393-1456', Columbia University, USA, Ph.D. (1974)) certainly considers Alnwick to have been among Cromwell's closest associates, together with Hungerford, Tiptoft and Kemp (*passim*, especially pp 145-6).
 7. See above p 271.
 8. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 144-5.

evidence that one deduces that Beaufort and Alnwick were congenial colleagues. Further evidence of this relationship is perhaps the fact that in February 1429, a time when Beaufort seems to have wrested some of the control of patronage away from Gloucester, Richard duke of York's March inheritance was removed from Gloucester's hands and placed jointly in the keeping of York, Bishop Alnwick and the earl of Northumberland.¹

Perhaps 1429 marked the highpoint of influence for this group of conciliar colleagues. In this year, the idea of a French coronation for the young king, Henry VI, was first mooted. This was to precipitate a coup by the duke of Gloucester, the reduction of their power and, most notably for the purposes of this study, the end of Bishop Alnwick's term as keeper of the privy seal. The duke of Bedford's proposal for the king's coronation in France was discussed in a great council in Westminster in April 1429.² The king's French army had begun to suffer setbacks, which were to culminate in the failure of the siege of Orléans and defeat at Patay. The potential propaganda value of Henry's proposed coronation was considerable. First, however, he had to be crowned in England, an event which occurred in November 1429.³ William Alnwick, who was in London at the time, was, no doubt, one of the prelates who shared a table at the coronation feast.⁴

Henry VI crossed to France in April 1430 after a series of important council meetings in Canterbury. There, Cardinal Beaufort and others accompanying the king attempted to ensure that conciliar government would continue smoothly, by extracting from their

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1. *CFR*, 1422-30, pp 260-2; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 183-4 - an indication that if Alnwick's contacts with Northumberland were few they were at least trusted to work together.
 2. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 322-9.
 3. There seems to be some confusion about the date. Griffiths (*Henry VI*, p 190) gives 5 November, as does *HBC* (p 41). Wolffe (*Henry VI*, p 48) and Harriss (*Cardinal Beaufort*, p 192) give 6 November. The latter date, a Sunday, is surely correct.
 4. *Political Poems and Songs Relating to English History Composed during the Period from the Accession of Edward III to that of Richard III*, ed. T. Wright, RS no. 14, vol. II (1861), p 147.

colleagues, including Gloucester, the agreement that all disputes between members of the council were to be submitted to its judgement; that the king's council in England should consult with its counterpart in France (and *vice versa*) on the dismissal or appointment of officers of state, members of council and the exercise of major aspects of patronage; and that as Gloucester's protectorate had ended at the king's coronation, so Bedford's regency in France should cease with Henry's arrival there.¹ It is not entirely clear whether Bishop Alnwick was in Canterbury during these negotiations,² but he would certainly have been aware of their importance. It may have been with some trepidation that he viewed the departure of, among others, his friends and colleagues Lords Cromwell and Tiptoft and Bishops Morgan and Stafford.

The first year of Henry's absence seems to have witnessed a fairly smooth period of government.³ Nevertheless, it may be an indication of tensions between councillors that the man chosen to replace the chancellor (Archbishop Kemp who was unwell), in making the opening speech to the parliament summoned to meet on 12 January 1431, was William Lyndwood.⁴ Lyndwood, who had much experience as 'prelocutor' of the clergy in convocation was, no doubt, well suited to this task, but it would seem that the chancellor's natural deputy was the keeper of the privy seal, William Alnwick, and not the keeper's own secondary. Alnwick was present in

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1. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 35-8; *RP*, vol. V, pp 415-6; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 200.
 2. He does not appear in any of the records of the council acts (*PPC*, vol. IV, pp 33-9; PRO: C 81/1545/13; PRO: E 28/51) and would seem to have been in his diocese (Norw. Reg, ff 39v, 128v-9). However, privy seal letters were made at Canterbury (*PPC*, vol. IV, p 35), and he is recorded as having assisted at the consecration of Lumley (see above, p 299). For the dangers inherent in trusting the dating clauses of privy seal warrants (among other royal instruments), see H.C. Maxwell-Lyte, *Historical Notes on the Use of the Great Seal of England* (1926), pp 63-70.
 3. Although the dearth of council records may either hide friction that existed or indicate Gloucester's ability to rule without it.
 4. *RP*, vol. IV, p 367.

parliament for he acted as trier of petitions,¹ so it appears that, unless his adequacy as a public speaker was in some doubt, Gloucester was administering a calculated insult to him.² It may have been with some relief that Bishop Alnwick learnt that he was to be one of the councillors who were to reinforce the king's French party.³ Some concern as to what might happen in their absence may be indicated by the fact that Beaufort and his supporters caused the agreement of April 1430 to be read and affirmed in council on 1 May.⁴ It was in the congenial company of Beaufort, Tiptoft, Cromwell and Lyndwood that Alnwick set sail in May.⁵

On their arrival in Rouen, Beaufort's party were in time to witness the final act in the process against Jeanne D'Arc. Bishop Alnwick certainly attended her abjuration on 24 May.⁶ He may well have witnessed her burning after her relapse.⁷ There is no

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1. *Ibid.*, p 368. However, his whereabouts at the beginning of the year are not entirely clear (see Appendix VII, p 416). P. Tisset (*Procès De Condamnation de Jeanne D'Arc*, La Société de L'Histoire de France, 3 vols (Paris, 1960-71), vol. II, p 384) states that Alnwick was in Rouen on 1 January 1431, but cites no source.
 2. 'It may surely be attributed to the duke's direction that with the chancellor, Archbishop Kemp, 'detained by infirmity', the duty of opening parliament....fell on Lyndwood.' (J.S. Roskell, 'Sir John Tyrell', pp 277-315 in *Parliament and Politics*, vol. III, p 298).
 3. By 8 March 1431 it had been decided that he was to attend on the king for six months (in fact he was absent more than nine), and to be paid 700 marks for his expenses (PRO: E 403/696 m 17; E 404/47/190).
 4. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 415-6. Present were Beaufort, Archbishop Kemp, Bishops Alnwick, Morgan, Stafford, and Langdon, and Lords Cromwell, Tiptoft and Hungerford. It was perhaps ominous that Gloucester was absent.
 5. Gregory's Chronicle (*The Historical Collections of a Citizen of London in the Fifteenth Century*, ed. J. Gairdner, Camden Society, new series, vol. XVII (1876), p 172) gives 2 May as the date of his departure. Griffiths (*Henry VI*, p 192) states that William Lyndwood accompanied them. If so, one wonders what became of the privy seal office in England. Perhaps it was left in the capable hands of Richard Caudray?
 6. Tisset (ed.), *Procès*, vol. I, p 385.
 7. Beaufort definitely seems to have taken a leading part at this point (Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 209). (ctd on next page)

reason to suppose that, coming fresh from his proceedings against the Lollards of the Norwich diocese, Alnwick had any compunction about Jeanne's trial. If he believed, as any loyal servant of Henry V might, that the English king had a God-given right to France, a woman claiming to hear spiritual voices opposing this must, of necessity, be considered as conniving with instruments of the devil. A man who could speak so fiercely to nuns whose veils were not brought down to their eyebrows' would have had few misgivings about condemning a woman who dressed in male attire.²

If the trial of Jeanne was the most dramatic event in which Bishop Alnwick took part during his French sojourn, one of the most politically important was probably his agreement in the autumn of 1431, together with the other lords of the council in France,³ to guarantee the repayment of a large loan elicited from Cardinal Beaufort. Altogether Alnwick bound himself in £666 13s 4d. It was claimed later that without this money neither the siege of Louviers nor the king's coronation would have been successfully achieved. The king was crowned in Paris cathedral on 16 December by Cardinal Beaufort assisted by a number of bishops,⁴ no doubt including William Alnwick. In marked contrast to the delay between Henry's arrival in France and the coronation, the return was speedy. The party sailed on 9 February, leaving Beaufort in the Low Countries.⁵

(ctd) Among those named as having taken part in the process in royal letters of protection were the earls of Warwick and Stafford, Bishop Alnwick and Lords Cromwell and Tiptoft (Tisset (ed.), *Procès*, vol. II, p 384).

1. See above pp 262-3.
2. The English attitude to Jeanne is analysed by W.T. Waugh in 'Joan of Arc in English Sources of the Fifteenth Century', *Historical Essays in Honour of James Tait*, ed. J.G. Edwards, V.H. Galbraith, E.F. Jacob (Manchester, 1933), pp 387-98.
3. Including Louis of Luxembourg, chancellor of France, the earls of Warwick, Stafford, Salisbury and Mortain, Lords Arundel, Beaumont, Welles, Cromwell, Tiptoft, William Lyndwood (who thus seems to have been in France, see above, p 303) and others (PRO: Chancery: Ancient Petitions (SC 8): SC 8/144/7180-7182; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 210-2).
4. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 193.
5. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 213.

Less than two weeks later, the king's arrival in London was the cause of great celebration: '...And when he was come to Saint Paules, ther he alight down on his hors; and there come the Archebissop of Canterbury, and the Archebissop of York, and the Bissop of Lincoln, and the Bissop of Bathe, Salisbury, Norwich, Ely and Rochester, and the Dene of Paules with his convent, in procession, in theire best arraye of holy chirche, and met with hym, and did obeseuance as bylongyth to hym, and censed him at his comyng in; and so brought the kyng to the high auter, with roiall songe...'.¹

Relations between the king's servants were not, however, as cordial as these scenes may imply. The fears, hinted at by the anxiety of the councillors who had travelled abroad to maintain some influence at home, had proved only too well warranted. During 1431, the duke of Gloucester had increased his popularity and power with the suppression of the heretical rising of 'Jack Sharpe'.² By November, he evidently felt himself to be established strongly enough to attack his rivals and enhance his own position. On 6 November, the question of the legality of Beaufort's retention of the see of Winchester was again raised, as was the rather more dangerous question of whether he had offended against the statute of Praemunire in gaining an exemption from the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Canterbury. Only Bishop Lumley had the courage to insist that nothing should be done until the cardinal's return.³ Perhaps on the strength of this success, on 28 November, Lord Scrope forced through an increase of salary for the duke against the opposition of the treasurer, Lord Hungerford.⁴

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1. *The Brut or Chronicles of England*, ed. F.W.D. Brie, Part I, EETS, vol. CXXXI (1906), p 464. The whole scene is also described, in matchless poetry, by John Lydgate in *The Great Chronicle of London*, ed. A.H. Thomas and I.D. Thornley (1938), pp 156-70.
 2. Vickers, *Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester*, pp 222-4.
 3. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 100-1.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp 104-6.

The case against Cardinal Beaufort was strengthened by the discovery that he was planning to export a large proportion of his valuables to the continent without proper licence. On 25 February, writs were issued for a parliament from 12 May, which was to hear the case of treason against Beaufort. On the same day began a complete change of personnel in royal government.¹ That day, the chancellor, treasurer and keeper of the privy seal, Archbishop Kemp, Lord Hungerford and Bishop Alnwick, collected what was to be their last payment of official salary.² All lost their offices to be replaced, respectively, by Bishop John Stafford, John, Lord Scrope and William Lyndwood. Not only the three officers of state but also John Tiptoft, Ralph Cromwell, steward and chamberlain respectively of the king's household, Robert Gilbert, dean of the chapel royal, William Hayton, the king's secretary, and John de la Bere, the king's almoner, lost their positions, to be replaced by those who better enjoyed Gloucester's trust.³ Until relatively recently, little has been made of Bishop Alnwick's dismissal, perhaps because there is no surviving record of the event.⁴ It seems certain that he was dismissed. Davies' picture of the devoted diocesan longing to return to episcopal duties, attractive as it is, does not reflect the whole truth.⁵

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1. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 215-8.
 2. PRO: E 403/700, m 14. The roll records nothing for 26 February; on 27 February (m 16) begins the treasurership of John, Lord Scrope.
 3. J.S. Roskell, 'Sir John Tiptoft', pp 107-150 in *Parliament and Politics*, vol. III, pp 141-2; 'Sir John Tyrell', pp 277-315 in *ibid.*, pp 300-1.
 4. McFarlane, 'The Lancastrian Kings', p 395, did not consider the matter and this seems to have been the pattern followed until Roskell wrote about Tiptoft (see previous note) and identified Alnwick with the Beaufort group. This interpretation has now been followed, surely correctly, by Harriss in *Cardinal Beaufort*. It was perhaps the appearance of R.L. Storey's 'English Officers of State, 1399-1485', *BIHR*, vol. XXI (1958), pp 84-92 (which identified the date of Lyndwood's appointment) that enabled this reassessment to be made, although neither of the recent biographies of Henry VI (by Griffiths and Wolffe) mention Alnwick's dismissal. Perhaps they had been misled by Hamilton Thompson's statement (*Visitations II*, p xv) that Alnwick probably resigned in 1428.
 5. Davies, Ph.D., p 633.

The tension surrounding the parliament of May 1432 is reflected in the orders sent out to the duke of Norfolk, five earls, and Lord Cromwell not to bring large retinues.¹ Cromwell complained vigorously about his dismissal, and managed to ensure that it was recorded on the parliament rolls that he was innocent of 'things imagined against him',² but did not regain his office. Cardinal Beaufort returned to defend himself and his partial reinstatement into royal favour was probably a direct result of Gloucester's attempt to pin on him the crime of treason as well as over-stepping the statute of Praemunire - 'a classic instance of the folly of over-kill'.³ Bishop Alnwick appeared in parliament, partly to act as a trier of petitions (the one sign that he was not totally *persona non grata* with Gloucester) and, perhaps principally, to support a petition for the repayment of Beaufort's massive loan which he and many of his colleagues had guaranteed and on which the government had defaulted.⁴ For the next year at least, Bishop Alnwick was totally frozen out of government. He seems to have suffered more than his colleagues Kemp, Cromwell, Tiptoft and Hungerford who, despite losing their offices, soon returned to the council.⁵ Alnwick's almost complete absence from the council records between 25 February 1432 and November 1433 seem to confirm the view that his membership of the council had depended on his position as keeper of the privy seal and that in losing his office he lost his place on council.⁶ His period at the very centre of power was over.

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1. Roskell, 'Thomas Chaucer', *Parliament and Politics*, vol. III, p 186.
 2. *RP*, vol. IV, p 392.
 3. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 218-20.
 4. PRO: SC 8/144/7180-7182.
 5. He did not, however, suffer for as long as Bishop Lumley, who was excluded from government until 1446 (Storey, 'Marmaduke Lumley', p 119; G.L. Harriss, 'Marmaduke Lumley and the Exchequer Crisis of 1446-9', pp 143-78 in *Aspects of Late Medieval Government and Society, Essays Presented to J.R. Lander*, ed. J.G. Rowe (Toronto, 1986), p 152).
 6. This point should not be over-pressed as the records for this period (*PPC*, vol. IV, pp 109-82; PRO: C 81/1545/27-46; E 28/53-55) are not very full - an indication of some dislocation in the privy seal office after his departure? His one appearance during this period was on 17 September 1432 (C 81/1545/38), a date when he had to be in London for convocation (*HBC*, p 601).

2. William Alnwick, a Bishop in Politics, 1432-1449

Whether through his own inclination or not, William Alnwick now had, for the first time, the leisure to devote to his diocese of Norwich. On the very day after his consecration as bishop he had commissioned William Bernham to act as vicar general. Bernham's last recorded act in this post was on 7 March 1432. From then until 11 May 1434, at about which time John Wygenhale was commissioned, Bishop Alnwick acted for himself.¹ In June 1433, the Duke of Bedford returned to England from France.² It may have been the consequent change of power balance in government, which included the replacement as treasurer of Lord Scrope by Lord Cromwell, that led to Alnwick's reinstatement as a member of the king's council.

On 22 November 1433, Bishop Alnwick was present at what appears to have been a meeting of the lords in parliament as much as of the continual council. Less than a month later, on 16 December, '*concordat fuit quod fiant littere sub privato sigillo regis Episcopis Lincolniensis et Norwicensis ac Domino Hungerford consiliaris regis de e'endo cum aliis consiliar' Regis apud Westmonasterium in XV^{to} Hillar' prox'*'.³ It would seem that the decision had been made to re-admit him. During the remaining years of Henry's minority,⁴ Bishop Alnwick continued to attend the council, if only infrequently.⁵ It is difficult to assess how assiduous he was, because a large proportion of the council records give either an incomplete record or none at all. Nevertheless, the

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1. Norwich Reg, ff 17, 53-69. Significantly, Archbishop Kemp, too, chose this period to devote some time to his diocese (Davies, Ph.D., p 404), although he was active again on the council before Alnwick (Nigota, 'John Kempe', p 269).
 2. Tuck, *Crown and Nobility*, p 271.
 3. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 187-8. The next quindene of Hillary was 27 January 1434.
 4. A period which quite neatly covers the remaining period of William Alnwick's episcopate at Norwich (the minority ending at some time between mid-1436 and November 1437, and the episcopate in February 1437).
 5. See table X. The sources for this period are: PRO: C 81/1545/38-65; E 28/53-58; *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 128-344, vol. V, pp 3-60; *CPR* 1429-36, p 27; *Foedera*, vol. V, pp 1, 18-9, 36.

bishop's itinerary indicates that he was in London several times a year, and at Cirencester in November 1434 at the time of the great council meeting there.¹ It seems possible, therefore, that he attended council, although nothing like as often as during his period as keeper of the privy seal, rather more often than recorded.

Bishop Alnwick was not at the parliamentary council meeting of 21 December 1433, at which Bishop Langley of Durham was given leave to retire. At this meeting, Cardinal Beaufort, the two archbishops, and Bishops Morgan and Gray agreed to continue serving during term-time and waived any salary.² As there is no evidence that Alnwick received any payment for attendance, it is probable that his service was under the same terms. His absence from the latter part of this parliament is explained by his presence at Bury St Edmunds, celebrating an ordination service at the Franciscan friary of Babwell on 19 December.³ He was probably at Bury to prepare for the reception of the king there. It had been decided earlier in the parliament that, because of the administration's enormous financial difficulties, as reported to parliament by the new treasurer Lord Cromwell, Henry should be sent to stay at the abbey of Bury St Edmunds until St George's day.⁴ The king's entourage arrived at Bury on Christmas Eve. With the aid of his tutor, the earl of Warwick, Henry

'descendit a palefrido, et versus processionem ad locum pallio serico circumtectum se dirigens, ibidem pro adoranda crucis imagine genuflexit, quem, cum omni solemnitate processionali receptum, ... venerabiles patres episcopus Norwic' et abbas saepedictus pontificalibus induti, solemniter incenserunt, ac aspersum aqua benedicta per manus abbatis, et cruce allata per eundem ori regio primitus osculanda, processio ad summum altare procedens cum antiphona... introduxit...'.⁵

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1. See Appendix VII, pp 420 and *passim*.
 2. *RP*, vol. IV, p 446. Witchell ('John Kemp', p 89) is mistaken in placing Alnwick there. He probably confused him with the bishop of Lincoln - Gray.
 3. *Norw. Reg.*, f 139v.
 4. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p 74.
 5. *Monasticon*, vol. III, p 113. The original text is in BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 110.

Bishop Alnwick not only greeted the king on his arrival at Bury but also stayed in the area throughout the period of Henry's stay.¹

His presence may perhaps be explained by his position as local diocesan, but some doubts about this are raised by the abbot of Bury's jealous protection of his exemption from diocesan jurisdiction.² A further explanation of his presence may perhaps be that by this date he had entered into a closer relationship with the king. It is extremely doubtful that Alnwick was Henry's confessor at the beginning of the minority.³ There is some difficulty in ascertaining when he took up this post. A George Arthurton was confessor in 1424;⁴ by February 1430, Brother John⁵ Walden was being paid as such.⁶ He was, presumably, replaced by John Lowe, prior provincial of the Austin friars.⁷ Perhaps it was when Lowe was provided to the diocese of St Asaph in August 1433⁸ that the decision was made to give the post to Bishop Alnwick. He was certainly described as confessor in the account of the outbreak of his quarrel with Abbot Whethamstede, c. 1432-3.⁹ It was thus William Alnwick, and not William Aiscough¹⁰ who was the first bishop to hold the position, and it may well have been against him, as much as against Aiscough, that Gascoigne fulminated:

*'Ante Henricum Sextum nunquam fuit rex in Anglia qui
retinuit secum aliquem episcopum in curia sua nisi per
annum vel per diem, nec aliquis rex ante eum habuit*

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1. Norw. Reg., ff 66-8, 140.
 2. See above, pp 238-47.
 3. See Appendix I, pp 370-1.
 4. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 53.
 5. Sic? or was it Thomas? John is stated in all records cited below, but Hamilton Thompson, *Visitations II*, p xv) suggests that Alnwick succeeded Thomas Netter (alias Walden). According to Davis, ('William Waynflete', p 15) Henry Sever, the first provost of Eton, had been the king's confessor in the 1430s. Further work is clearly necessary on royal confessors.
 6. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 28-30; *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 157; PRO: E 28/51.
 7. *CPR 1429-36*, p 136.
 8. *HBC*, p 296.
 9. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 300. If his attempted visit to Binham was in November 1432 or the spring of 1433, as suggested above (see pp 248-9) and if Amundesham was correct in describing him as confessor at this time, his absence from political influence was perhaps less protracted than suggested above, p 307.
 10. *BRVO (sic)*, vol. I, p 16.

episcopum aliquem in suum confessorem, sed unum bonum doctorem in Theologia; et si rex aliquis causa fuit quod confessor suus fuit electus in episcopum, mox remisit et licenciavit eum ire in suam curam, et nunquam postea occupavit officium confessoris regii'.¹

If Bishop Alnwick undertook this responsibility at all conscientiously it would, of course, have brought him into close contact with the king. Having established himself in the king's confidence, he might expect further exhibition of royal trust and favour. Such trust was indicated in his appointment as supervisor of Queen Katherine's will in 1437,² and as one of the thirty-one feoffees appointed to execute the king's will in 1443.³ Some affection for Alnwick is perhaps demonstrated by the fact that he was one of those (the only bishop apart from Cardinal Beaufort) to receive a new year's gift from the king in 1437.⁴ It is also perhaps not too fanciful to detect some affection for his confessor, together with undoubted respect for the abilities Alnwick had exhibited as bishop of Norwich, in the letter written on 24 May 1436 to request Bishop Alnwick's translation from Norwich to Lincoln.⁵

It may be that this letter was more symptomatic of the respect felt for Alnwick by his conciliar colleagues. However, by the end of 1437⁶ Henry VI had obtained his majority and was free not only to choose his own confessor⁷ but also those who were to aid him in the pursuit of his dearest projects. It was, for good or ill,⁸ to

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1. *Locí e Libro*, p 220.
 2. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 505-6.
 3. *RP*, vol. V, pp 70-3, 165-6.
 4. *PPC*, vol. V, pp 61-4.
 5. PRO: E 28/57; *Foedera*, vol. V, part 1, p 31. See Appendix III.
 6. R.L. Storey's contention that the minority was, at least, coming to an end in 1436 is pretty convincing (*The End of the House of Lancaster* (1966), p 31) although most authorities continue to place its end at the great council meeting of November 1437.
 7. It would seem that Alnwick was replaced by William Aiscough either shortly before or after the latter's promotion to Salisbury in February 1438 (Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 346).
 8. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, pp 136-40 and Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp 242-8 take opposing views.

his educational and ecclesiastical foundations at Eton and Cambridge that Henry devoted a large proportion of his energies and attention in the years following the attainment of his majority. Their aims of education and intercession would seem to accord well with the experience and attitude of his former confessor, who was intimately concerned with both foundations.' William Alnwick's connection with Eton was a natural result of its position in his diocese. His appointment as visitor of King's was perhaps as much in recognition of the university's jealously guarded independence from the bishop of Ely,² as of his role in compiling its statutes.

In July 1443, the king rescinded the commission to Alnwick, Aiscough, Lyndwood, Somerset and Langton to compile the statutes and took their composition into his own hands.³ Nevertheless, Bishop Alnwick seems to have been one of those who delivered the redrafted statutes to the college's first provost, William Millington. This is illustrated by Bishop Beckington's acrimonious correspondence with the latter, after he had refused to swear to clauses which, he considered, contravened the rights of the university's chancellor.⁴ It is easy to feel sympathy for Millington in his attempt to protect the liberties of the university, and tempting to believe his protest that '*Lincolniensis, ut nosti, in iudicio sedere noluit, ne tam sinistrae sententiae particeps diceretur aut fieret*'.⁵ Whether or not William Alnwick was disillusioned towards the end of his life by the new direction of the king's educational foundations is uncertain. However, it may be significant of the influence of Henry's two episcopal confessors, Alnwick and Aiscough, both Cambridge graduates, as much as that of the university's chancellor

1. See above, pp 269-71.

2. *BRVO*, vol. II, p 1312.

3. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p 139. None of this group was among those invited to the foundation stone ceremony to be held on 28 September 1444 (BL: Add. Ms. 7096, ff 148v-149).

4. *Bekynton Correspondence*, vol. II, pp 157-74. Those who, Beckington claimed, had delivered the new statutes were, apart from himself, the earl of Suffolk, Bishops Alnwick, Aiscough (whose presence was denied by Millington) and Lyhart, and the king's secretary, Richard Andrew.

5. *Ibid.*, pp 164-5.

John Langton,¹ that the king chose their university rather than Oxford for his foundation.

If William Alnwick was as close to the king as his successor Aiscough, little evidence has survived. As Alnwick died before the popular risings of 1450, it is difficult to tell whether he shared in the opprobrium felt towards Bishop Aiscough for his perceived pernicious influence on Henry. Perhaps he did not. Apart from his two dioceses, the granting of which ensured further years of toil, he seems to have gained little from years of devoted royal service. His award between the dean and chapter of Lincoln was confirmed in parliament;² he was granted a weekly market and biannual fair in Spaldwick, Huntingdonshire;³ he shared in the grant of a view of frankpledge in the manor of Hunsdon, Hertfordshire, which he held with Bishop Lyndwood, Lord Cromwell, John Fray, chief baron of the exchequer, and Sir William Estfield;⁴ and in 1445 his petition for a licence to cut down eighteen acres of woods in Rutland was granted.⁵

Whether well rewarded or not, William Alnwick clearly felt by 1442 that he had expended enough of his energy on secular service. On 24 April 1442, he was granted an exemption for life 'from personal attendance in any council or parliament, on his showing that both in France and elsewhere he has spent a great part of his vital force in things not divine, that he cannot neglect the cure of souls without grave peril to his soul and that he has rarely had leisure from such councils and parliaments'.⁶ Leaving the question of parliamentary service aside for the moment, how much of Bishop Alnwick's time had been taken up by his attendance on councils? On

1. A suggestion of Griffiths (*Henry VI*, p 247).

2. *RP*, vol. V, p 10.

3. PRO: Chancery Charter Rolls (C 53): C 53/187, m 20, where the grant is dated 17 December 18 Henry VI (1439). Cf. *Calendar of the Charter Rolls Preserved in the PRO*, vol. VI, 1427-1516 (1927), p 211 where it is given the date 1441.

4. *Ibid.*, p 50 (6 July 1444). This was granted on 5 May on the petition of Estfield (PRO: E 28/73/12-13).

5. E 28/75/8. Was this connected with building work either at Lyddington or at Lincoln?

6. *CPR*, 1441-6, p 85.

13 November 1437, he had been one of those re-appointed to the council,¹ but in the first five years of the king's majority (1437-42), his attendance does not seem to have been excessive.² However, his itinerary shows that he was frequently in London, as well as being at Windsor, Reading and Sheen at the time of council meetings in these places.³ His attendance figures should therefore probably be a great deal higher. Moreover, he is recorded as having witnessed charters on numerous occasions during this period.⁴ There is some controversy as to the usefulness of these charter witness lists.⁵ Whether or not they can be taken literally, Bishop Alnwick's frequent appearance would seem to demonstrate that he was more often in attendance at court than is indicated by the increasingly inadequate council records. Similarly, Bishop Alnwick did not completely disappear from the council's records after his 'retirement'.⁶ His itinerary reveals regular stays in London, as well as a visit of several weeks to Winchester at the time of the parliament there in June-July 1449.⁷ He was also a regular charter witness until January 1448.⁸ It would thus seem that although Alnwick had, as he had requested, been allowed to retire from the centre of royal administration, he was called upon from time to time to make himself available to the government. Moreover, on at least two occasions, he was summoned

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1. *RP*, vol. IV, p 438.
 2. *PPC*, vol. V, pp 64-209; PRO: C 81/1545/64-85; PRO: E 28/59 - 70. See Table X. Cf. the estimate (R. Virgoe, 'The Composition of the King's Council, 1437-61', pp 134-60 in *BIHR*, vol. XLIII (1970), p 57) that he attended on twenty-one occasions between November 1437 and July 1443. Seventeen members had better, one had the same and six had a worse record of attendance.
 3. See Appendix VII, pp 422-31.
 4. C 53/187, mm 7-20. See Appendix IX.
 5. Maxwell-Lyte, *The Great Seal*, pp 234-7, discusses the attestation of charters. For opposing views of their significance, see Storey, *End of the House of Lancaster*, p 134n, and Virgoe, 'The Composition of the King's Council', pp 139-40.
 6. PRO: C 81/1545/86-95, C81/1546/1-49; E 28/71-79; *PPC*, vol V, pp 210-308, vol. VI, pp 3-90; *RP*, vol. V, p 447. Compare the table with Virgoe's statement ('The Composition of the King's Council', p 157-8), that Bishop Alnwick attended three sessions in 1443-6 and two in 1447-9.
 7. See Appendix VII, pp 432-42.
 8. PRO: C 53/188-190.

to special council meetings: once to discuss the king's proposed journey to meet King Charles in France,¹ and, in December 1446, to a meeting to be held in January 1447 to discuss the future parliament,² and, perhaps, to discuss possible proceedings against the duke of Gloucester.³ There is no evidence that he attended this latter meeting, and his itinerary seems to indicate that he stayed away from the subsequent parliament at Bury St Edmunds.⁴

Why did Bishop Alnwick choose to retire from politics in April 1442?⁵ He may have felt the need to devote himself to his diocese, or that he no longer had enough energy to share between things spiritual and profane. He did, after all, only live for another seven and a half years. However, he does seem to have chosen a time when the political atmosphere was changing. In the ten years following his resignation from the privy seal, his friends and connections had very much remained the same as those with whom he had associated from the start of the reign. Although he does not appear to have had many business dealings with Cardinal Beaufort, it is probably significant that in November 1435 Bishop Alnwick was one of the men to whom the cardinal chose to grant what appears to have been a joint pension of 1,000 marks from several of his episcopal manors.⁶ Harriss⁷ may be right in his contention that

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1. PRO: E 28/77/4. There is some difficulty in giving a year to this summons (dated 25 September, at Marlow) to a meeting to be held at Westminster on 11 October. It is not clear whether 1445 or 1446 is correct (cf. Wolffe, *Henry VI*, p 365, which places Henry at Marlow on 25 September in both years; and *ibid.*, pp 189-90, for the proposed meeting).
 2. E 28/77/15 (17 December 1446).
 3. So suggests Virgoe ('The Composition of the King's Council', pp 144-5, 156).
 4. See Appendix VII. This seems almost certain despite his appearance as a witness of a charter granted at Bury (PRO: C 53/189 m 24).
 5. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 280, makes the point that he cannot have been much more than fifty.
 6. PRO: E 28/57; CCR, 1435-41, pp 38-9; *The Register of the Common Seal of the Priory of St Swithin, Winchester, 1345-1497*, ed. J Greatrex, Hampshire Record Society, vol. II (1979), pp 78-9. The other men were Archbishop Kemp; Edmund Beaufort, count of Mortain, the cardinal's nephew; Lord Cromwell; the London merchants Richard Buckland, treasurer of Calais, Thomas Walsingham and Hugh Dyke; and John Asshe.
 7. *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 266.

this was connected with the loan of 8,000 marks raised in the same year from the three staplers Hamo Sutton, Hugh Dyke and William Estfield. Beaufort, Kemp, Alnwick and Cromwell were all trustees for its repayment, much of which had been assigned from the lands of the dead duke of Bedford and the minor, John, Lord Arundel.¹ Whatever the truth of this particular contention, the two events show that the four men, Beaufort, Kemp, Alnwick and Cromwell, were still closely connected in 1435. It was perhaps as a result of this Beaufort connection that the duke of York chose Alnwick as one of his feoffees in 1436.² A close connection with York would seem to be confirmed by Alnwick's membership of the duke's council in 1437,³ and by the fact that he was one of those chosen to represent the duke's interests after the latter had been appointed as the king's lieutenant in France in 1440.⁴

Alnwick's association with lord Cromwell continued,⁵ perhaps culminating in the erection of Tattershall College in 1439, when Bishop Alnwick acted both as feoffee, along with Cardinal Beaufort, Lords Scrope and Hungerford, Walter Tailboys and William Paston, and as diocesan.⁶ Moreover, on more than one occasion Bishop Alnwick seems to have been staying with Cromwell.⁷ The ties between these two men were no doubt strengthened by the fact that Alnwick was, successively, bishop of the two dioceses within which

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1. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 485-6.
 2. *PRO*: E 28/57 (4 May 1436); *CPR* 1429-36, pp 514-5. He was still York's feoffee in September 1448 (E 28/79/3).
 3. P.A. Johnson, *Duke Richard of York* (Oxford, 1988), p 34.
 4. *Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Wars of the English in France during the Reign of Henry VI*, ed. J. Stevenson, RS no. 22, vol. II, part II (1864), pp 585-91.
 5. See also Friedrichs, 'Ralph, Lord Cromwell', pp 146-8. She sees Cromwell's support for Alnwick against Whethamstede (see above, pp 251-5) as further evidence of friendship.
 6. *CPR* 1436-41, p 292; *CPL*, vol. IX, pp 159-64; see also above p 271. The licence to erect the college was granted on condition that it met with the approval of the bishops of Bath and Lincoln (E 28/62, 10 July 1439).
 7. 8 August 1438: Wingfield (cf. *Visitations* II, p xxxiii n; or was this a visit to Suffolk?); 30 September 1440 and 27 November 1441: Tattershall (Linc. Reg., ff 119, 85v, 86v). In March 1442, he seems to have been swapping small amounts of land in Wooburn with Cromwell, Sir William Lovell, and their wives, who were sisters (*CPR* 1441-6, p 60).

most of Cromwell's estates lay.¹ Similar reasoning may explain why Alnwick was chosen as a feoffee and as supervisor of the will of Sir William Philip, Lord Bardolph.²

As time went on, and Alnwick himself aged, it was natural that his service towards his friends began to appear more and more in terms of executing or supervising their wills. He was an executor of Bishop Langley, who died in 1437, leaving him his '*librum meliorem vocatum Moralia Gregorii*',³ and joined with his fellow executors in founding a chantry for Langley in the church of St Leonard, Middleton in Lancashire.⁴ One of Langley's executors, Thomas Holden, a long-serving servant of Langley's,⁵ in turn chose Bishop Alnwick as one of the supervisors of his will, leaving him a '*cipum de auratum planum*', which had been Langley's and a hundred marks to pray for the soul of both himself and Langley.⁶ In addition, Anne, countess of Stafford appointed Alnwick as supervisor, together with her son, his fellow councillor Humphrey, earl of Stafford, in October 1438.⁷ He also acted as executor for Bishop John Langdon of Rochester⁸ and as supervisor of the will of his erstwhile colleague, William Lyndwood.⁹

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1. A point made by Friedrichs, 'Ralph, Lord Cromwell', p 147.
 2. CCR 1441-7, pp 20-2 (fellow feoffees include Cromwell, Tiptoft, Sir Simon Felbrigge and John Wodehouse); Reg. Chich., vol. II, pp 598-605 ('*Insuper cum omnimoda filiali reverencia reverendum in Christo patrem dominum Willelmum Alnewyk Lincolnensem episcopum humiliter deprecor et exoro et Johannem Beaumont dominum de Folkyngham istius testamenti et ultime mee voluntatis fore supervisores*'), dated 1 December 1438, proved 8 July 1441. He could have chosen Bishop Brouns of Norwich, so Alnwick must have been his preferred choice.
 3. An inferior copy of the same book was left to Robert Rolleston. The will was dated 21 December 1436, proved 17 December 1439 (*Historiae Dunelmensis Scriptores Tres*, ed. J Raine, Surtees Society, vol. IX (1939), pp ccxi-ccl).
 4. CPR 1436-41, p 399. Did Alnwick regret his translation to Lincoln when the diocese of his origins was thus vacated?
 5. Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 5.
 6. Reg. Chich., vol. II, pp 579-84 (August 1441).
 7. *Ibid.*, pp 596-7.
 8. *Ibid.*, pp 556-8; dated 2 March 1434, proved 27 June 1437.
 9. LPL: Register Stafford, f 149v. Will made 22 November 1443, proved 26 November 1446. Lyndwood left Alnwick £10. This is an indication that if they supported the opponents Beaufort and Gloucester they could still work together in harmony.

However, the very fact that so many of his colleagues were beginning to die indicates something of the change of political balance which may have been responsible for his retirement. Those who remained alive were all associated with service to Henry V and the minority council. None of Alnwick's connections in this period, except for John, Viscount Beaumont, with whom he seems to have been associated on a number of occasions, were part of the new clique which the king had gathered around him since his majority. Far from being able to withdraw, 'confident of indirect influence',¹ Cardinal Beaufort has recently been revealed as a declining force in the early 1440s, through the actions not of his old enemy, Gloucester, but of the new power in the royal government, the earl of Suffolk.² It is probably significant that, after his official retirement, Bishop Alnwick reappeared in the king's councils in the autumn of 1442 at the time of the planning of the Earl of Somerset's French campaign - Beaufort's 'last throw'.³ This unsuccessful expedition marked the watershed between what might be called 'conciliar' rule under Beaufort and such men as Kemp, Cromwell and Alnwick, and 'court' rule by Suffolk and a group that can be called a 'faction' with much more confidence than can be applied to any section of the minority council. Of Bishop Alnwick's colleagues, apart from the cardinal, Lord Tiptoft was dead by 15 March 1443;⁴ Lord Hungerford appeared less and less after the summer of 1442;⁵ Archbishop Kemp was almost continually

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1. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 281.
 2. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 330-1.
 3. PRO: C 81/1545/86; *PPC*, vol. V, pp 210-8. Alnwick was present on 3, 8, 9, 10, 12, 16 and 17 October. For this campaign, see M.K. Jones, 'John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset and the French Expedition of 1443', *Patronage, the Crown and the Provinces in Late Medieval England*, ed. R.A. Griffiths (Gloucester, 1981), pp 79-102.
 4. *PPC*, vol. V, pp 245-7.
 5. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 280. He died in the summer of 1449, having left Alnwick (who was not an executor) '*unum tabletum de argentum deaurat' stant super unum montem de argento de Assumpcione Beate Marie Virginis cum ij^{bus} foliis de argento super que folia in exteriori parte eorumdem sunt duo ymagines de argent' j de Sancto Johanne Evangelista et alt' de Sancto Matheo et in inferiori parte dictorum foliorum sunt alii duo ymagines j de Sancta Katerina et alt' de Sancto Johanne Baptista*' - a magnificent testimony to their friendship (LPL: Register Stafford, f 117Av).

resident in his diocese from August 1443 to January 1445; and Bishop Aiscough and Lord Cromwell retired respectively from the royal council and the exchequer in July 1443.¹ Cromwell's resignation after ten years as treasurer has been the subject of much speculation. The most frequently proposed explanation is his supposed opposition to Somerset's expedition.² However, Friedrichs³ suggests that he was induced to resign by Suffolk, and was 'well rewarded' by the generous annuity he received. Certainly, his continued assiduous attendance at council seems to refute his claim of ill health. Nevertheless, his retirement signalled the fact that, by the middle of 1443, the political atmosphere had changed. It is at least possible that William Alnwick's own withdrawal was due to distaste for the new régime.⁴

Although Cardinal Beaufort and his followers lost some influence, the real victim of Suffolk's rise was the Duke of Gloucester. The first nail in his coffin was perhaps the trial and imprisonment of his wife, Eleanor, for witchcraft and treason in 1441.⁵ The evidence suggests that if Eleanor had not actually been seeking the king's death, she had been employing the supposed powers of her associates, Margery Jourdemayn, already a convicted witch,⁶ and the trio of not inconsequential secular priests, Roger Bolingbroke, Thomas Southwell and John Hunne, either to discover if she would ever become queen or, as she admitted, to help her bear Duke Humphrey a child. Although it may be right to claim that Gloucester was the 'true target',⁷ having once been accused of such

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1. *CPR 1441-6*, p 158; *PPC*, vol. V, pp 296-300. Significantly, the day of Cromwell's resignation was one of only two dates on which Alnwick is known to have attended council in 1443 (*PPC*, vol. V, pp 296-300).
 2. E.g. Storey, *'End of the House of Lancaster'*, p 72; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 340.
 3. 'Ralph, Lord Cromwell', pp 229-31.
 4. Only Marmaduke Lumley, of those who had lost their places in 1432, seems to have benefited (Storey, *'Marmaduke Lumley'*, p 128).
 5. The most comprehensive description of events is R.A. Griffiths, 'The Trial of Eleanor Cobham: an Episode in the Fall of Duke Humphrey of Gloucester', *BJRL*, vol. LI (1968-9), pp 381-99.
 6. *PPC*, vol. IV, p 114. On 9 May 1432, she had been released on her husband's security for her good behaviour.
 7. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 322.

crimes she had to be brought to trial. While the suspicion of treason required a lay trial, witchcraft, and the associated crime of heresy, were subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction. Consequently on 24 July 1441, she came before Archbishops Chichele and Kemp, Cardinal Beaufort and the bishops of Salisbury, London and Bath. On 20 or 21 October, she again came before an ecclesiastical tribunal. This time, in the absence of Chichele who was unwell, the presiding judges were Bishops Alnwick, Gilbert, Aiscough, and Brouns. Over the next few days she admitted some of the accusations, and on the 27 October, the same day that Margery Jourdain was burned,¹ she formally abjured her heresies before the bishops. On 6 November, Archbishop Chichele, assisted by Cardinal Beaufort and Bishops Alnwick, Aiscough and Gilbert, formally divorced her from Gloucester.² Three days later the bishops pronounced her penance. Her progress to three London churches, offering at each a burning taper that she had carried, vividly described by many contemporary poems and chronicles,³ was typical of the sentences imposed on heretics and other offenders tried in Bishop Alnwick's (and other) episcopal courts.⁴ The source of her sentence of perpetual imprisonment has been questioned⁵ but imprisonment too was a potential sentence for heresy and it is possible that the bishops handed down this sentence also.

There is no evidence that Bishop Alnwick felt any more compunction about his part in this trial than he did about that of Jeanne D'Arc. Heresy and witchcraft were crimes to which one could not turn a blind eye. Archbishop Chichele's role in the procedure (despite occasional absence for illness) militates against a belief

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1. Her previous conviction rendered this sentence inevitable.
 2. Griffiths, 'The Trial', p 394, disputes previous claims that this might have been a matter of some relief to Gloucester. However, in divorcing her the bishops were, in effect, distancing Gloucester from the taint of her crime and thus protecting him.
 3. E.g. 'The Lament of the Duchess of Gloucester', *Historical Poems of the XIVth and XVth Centuries*, ed. R.H. Robbins (New York, 1959), pp 176-9; *The Brut*, vol. II, pp 480-2.
 4. See above, pp 214-7.
 5. Griffiths, 'The Trial', pp 398-9.

that it was an out and out attack on Gloucester.¹ If it was, it seems that such indirect action was as much as Bishop Alnwick was prepared to undertake.² As far as can be deduced from the records, he seems to have absented himself, although summoned, from the council meeting of early 1447 that may have witnessed the planning of Gloucester's downfall; and it is highly unlikely that he attended the Bury St Edmunds parliament that precipitated his end.³ There was probably not much love lost between Gloucester and Alnwick, but, whether the duke was plotting treason as accused or not, it seems likely that the political atmosphere which brought about his end was almost equally antipathetic to the bishop.

This point should not, however, be laboured too much. There is no evidence of any animosity between the bishop and Suffolk. Indeed, Suffolk evidently trusted Alnwick sufficiently to make him one of his feoffees - a position he occupied by 1448.⁴ It is not safe to assume, that just because William Alnwick was associated in the business dealings of the duke of York⁵ and Lord Cromwell, he disapproved of Suffolk. The danger involved in over-stressing the exclusivism of well defined political factionalism is illustrated by the names of those who joined together to found St Christopher's guild at Thame in December 1447:⁶ Archbishop Stafford, Bishop Alnwick, Humphrey, duke of Buckingham, William, marquis and earl of

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1. One should also guard against accusing royal servants of such plots and absolving Henry himself of guilt. The awful retribution of pressing to death against the woman who dared to berate the king for Eleanor's sentence would seem to indicate his own compliance, if not, indeed, his initiation (*The Brut*, vol. II, pp 483-4).
 2. The supposition that his motives were entirely pure may be modified somewhat by the fact that in February 1441 he and Cardinal Beaufort had bought 'a plaint of intrusion against Humphrey...and Eleanor...touching their free tenement in the parish of All Hallows the Great in London' (*Calendar of Plea and Memoranda Rolls Preserved Among the Archives of the City of London at the Guildhall*, vol. V, 1437-1457, ed. P.E. Jones (1954), p 36).
 3. See above, p 315.
 4. *CPR 1447-54*, pp 38-9, 211-2. The other feoffees included Archbishop Stafford, Bishops Lumley and Lyhart, Viscount Beaumont, and Lords Scales, Sudeley and Say.
 5. *CCR 1441-7*, p 439; *CPR 1446-52*, p 218. See also above, p 316.
 6. *CPR 1446-52*, pp 180-1. See above, pp 271-2.

Suffolk, Lords Cromwell and Sudeley, Sir William Lovell, Drew Barentyn, and Richard and Sibyl Quatermain. William Alnwick's other major foundation of the period, the chantry which he established in Alnwick in 1448,¹ was no doubt closer to his heart. Towards the end of his life he was turning, like many of his contemporaries, to his roots.²

As diocesan, William Alnwick continued to be a useful man to have as a feoffee for the execution of one's will, being so chosen by Sir John Fastolf,³ John Cornwall, Lord Fanhope,⁴ Elizabeth, Lady Grey of Codnor,⁵ and Robert, Lord Willoughby of Eresby.⁶ Lest it be assumed that his powers as a diocesan were only used in favour of those, like Willoughby, who were friends of Lord Cromwell, it is perhaps worth noting his grants to William Tailboys. In June 1444, the bishop's commissary, John Percy, subdean of Lincoln cathedral, committed the administration of the goods of the intestate Walter Tailboys esquire to his son and heir William '*circumspecto viro*'.⁷ This same William, lord of Kyme, was granted the right to a private oratory in January 1445, and in about March of the same year he was licensed to appoint a private confessor to absolve even those sins normally reserved to a bishop.⁸ It is tempting to think that Alnwick made this grant because he was aware that he could not possibly be available on all occasions when Tailboys might need such absolution. This apparent paragon of piety was the man whose violent exploits have been considered some of the most damning

1. CPR 1446-52, p 170.

2. Cf. Langley's foundation at Middleton (Storey, *Thomas Langley*, p 6).

3. 7 July 1449, together with Archbishops Kemp and Stafford, Bishops Waynflete and Moleyns, Lords Cromwell, Sudeley and Beauchamp, Sir John Fortescue and several East Anglian notables, lay and ecclesiastical including Clement Denston (CCR 1447-54, pp 228-9). The absence of Bishop Lyhart from this list is rather notable.

4. CPR 1441-6, pp 267-8; CCR 1441-7, pp 218-9, 222-3, 229.

5. Linc. Reg., ff 6-8; CCR 1441-7, pp 314-7, 351-2, 466-71.

6. Linc. Reg., f 2.

7. *Ibid.*, f 60.

8. *Ibid.*, ff 59, 55.

evidence for the corruption of royal government during Suffolk's ascendancy.¹

By 1448, Tailboys had at least two murders to his name, and Lord Willoughby, whose household seems to have suffered most at his hands, joined with Lords Cromwell and Welles in an attempt to bring him to justice. Their endeavours were unsuccessful, largely because Tailboys was being supported by the earl of Suffolk.² It is possible that Bishop Alnwick, who was a justice of the peace for Lincolnshire at this period,³ was associated with these attempts against Tailboys. Certainly he was linked with the three lords as the victim of an obscure case of slander which came before the Lincoln cathedral chapter in 1446.⁴ Whatever role Alnwick himself played, he is likely to have sympathised with the cause of Cromwell and his colleagues. It is likely therefore to have shocked him when, on 28 November 1449, Lord Cromwell was violently attacked by Tailboys and his followers as he was entering the council chamber.⁵ If Alnwick witnessed the event, and he was certainly in London at the time,⁶ it may even have hastened his demise.

There are certainly a number of reasons for thinking that William Alnwick's death was sudden and unexpected. In the previous year he had not only continued to perambulate his diocese, but had also made the arduous, and since his exemption of 1442 unnecessary, journey to Winchester for the parliament of July 1449. He had been in his manor of Lyddington on 5 November but by the 19th he was in London for the parliament. This was, surely, not the itinerary of

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1. E.g. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 580; Storey, *End of the House of Lancaster*, p 53.
 2. Friedrichs 'Ralph, Lord Cromwell', pp 242-3. On 3 June 1448, the king granted Tailboys' appeal against the commission ofoyer and terminer mounted against him (PRO: E 28/77/53).
 3. See below, pp 335-6, and Table XI.
 4. On 1 October 1446, Richard Bugden accused John Yerburch, who later apologised, of speaking evil ('vilipenderit') against the bishop, the three lords and their power (LAO: A 2/33, f 17v).
 5. Friedrichs 'Ralph, Lord Cromwell', pp 244-9; Stevenson (ed.), *Wars of the English*, vol. II, p 766.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 143, 163, 180v, 188, 190.

a man who knew himself to be on his last legs.¹ Yet on 5 December, a week after the attack on Cromwell, and two days after his last recorded act² he died.³ Moreover, the will that was proved on 10 December had been made as long ago as 12 October 1445.⁴ This would perhaps not be worthy of much comment were it not for the fact that the only executor of any moment whom he had named in his will, Sir William Estfield, had predeceased him by several years.⁵ Although his other executors, among them John Breton, Thomas Ryngrstede and John Wygenhale, were, no doubt, able and trustworthy, none of them were men of standing such as the bishop could, and surely would have called upon if he had any idea that his death was close.⁶ The fate of his own will is in sad contrast with the careful way in which he no doubt oversaw the execution of many of the wills of those who had entrusted him with the task. The unknown author of 'Giles' *Chronicle*, who was very well informed about the members of the episcopal bench records his death thus:

'Hoc anno, videlicet 5 Dec' obiit W. Alnewyke, Lincolniensis episcopus, vir multum discretus et virtuosus, sed quia sibi famulantibus fuerat nimis strictus, post ejus mortem sui famuli abstulerunt palam a suis executoribus duo millia marcarum inter se distribuenda. Hujus occasio conjici poterit facilius, quia ejus executores sacerdotes senes fuerunt, et non timore digni'.⁷

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1. See Appendix VII, pp 441-2. He was present in council at Blackfriars on 1 December (PRO: E 28/79/56).
 2. Linc. Reg., f 188.
 3. The dean and chapter had heard of his death by 11 December when they wrote for licence to elect (PRO: C 84/47/14).
 4. *Visitations* II, pp xxiv-xxx.
 5. Estfield, twice mayor of London (J.C. Wedgwood and A.D. Holt, *History of Parliament. Biographies of the Members of the Commons House, 1439-1509* (1936), p 304) had died in 1446. His will (LPL: Register Stafford, ff 139-41) exhibits the close connection between him and Alnwick. He left money to the bishop's servants, ten marks to his kinsman, Gregory Byrkes, who was living in the bishop's household, and '*meum magnum portipherum*' and a silver-gilt goblet '*iuxta electionem suam*' to Alnwick who was to have the last word in any dispute among the executors.
 6. The other executors were Thomas Twyer, one of his favourite preachers, and Thomas Duncan (*BRVO*, vol. I, p 605) whose position as an annuitant of York (Johnson, *Duke Richard*, p 231) may signify Alnwick's close relations with the duke at this time.
 7. *Incerti Scriptoris Chronicon Angliae Temporibus Ricardi II, Henrici IV, Henrici V et Henrici VI*, ed. J. Giles, Part II (1848), Henry VI section, p 39.

3. The Contribution of Bishop Alnwick to English Government

Bishop Alnwick's political career was not confined simply to his position as keeper of the privy seal and royal councillor, and his involvement with the leading political events and personalities of the period. His position as councillor and his status as bishop provided him with a number of other opportunities to be of service to royal government.

William Alnwick's first recorded act of royal service was in the field of diplomacy.¹ His diplomatic activities continued for some years after his promotion to the episcopate. His first employment in the field after his consecration was probably a mission of the utmost delicacy. Since Henry V's death, Humphrey, duke of Gloucester, had all but shattered the Burgundian alliance, carefully nursed by the duke of Bedford and Bishop Beaufort, by his marriage to, and pursuit of the inheritance of, Jacqueline, duchess of Holland. This had culminated, in 1424-5, in their invasion of Hainault after which he had abandoned her there and returned to England. In the spring of 1427, she had appealed for help,² and on 9 July 1427 it was agreed in council to provide Gloucester with the funds to further her campaign.³ However, the council was clearly preparing for peace as well as war, for at the end of May Bishop Alnwick and Lord Tiptoft were commissioned to go on an embassy to the dukes of Bedford and Burgundy '*pro quibusdam causis specialibus ipsum dominum Regem et consilium suum ad hoc moventibus*'.⁴ This embassy seems to have been sent with Gloucester's approval, because it was by his order that Garter King of Arms accompanied them.⁵ They seem to have completed their business with Burgundy by 26 June, when Philip wrote to the king for safe conducts for his ambassadors.⁶ These safe conducts were granted on 20 July, the

1. See Appendix I.

2. Vickers, *Humphrey Duke of Gloucester*, pp 197-9.

3. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 271-4.

4. PRO: E 403/680 mm 5-6. On 27 May, Alnwick was paid in advance £186 13s 4d, and Tiptoft £112. Each then received an extra £10. See also E 404/43/338-339.

5. E 404/44/163.

6. PRO: SC 1/57/73.

record noting that it was '*pro materia Ducisse Holland*' that Alnwick and Tiptoft had been sent.¹ It would seem that the mission had been successful. At any rate, Gloucester did not lead a fresh invasion force, and when, in January 1428, he received the papal verdict that Jacqueline's previous marriage had been valid, he preferred to marry his mistress Eleanor Cobham rather than to ratify his marriage to Jacqueline.²

Bishop Alnwick's next recorded diplomatic task was to treat in England with the envoys of the king of Castile. He was so commissioned, together with Lord Cromwell and William Lyndwood, on 6 November 1430.³ Clearly negotiations were already well under way, for within two days a truce was agreed, which was confirmed by the king a week later on 15 November.⁴ The greatest diplomatic event of the period was undoubtedly the Congress of Arras, called under the supervision of cardinal envoys from both the pope and the council of Basle, to try and make peace in France.⁵ Bishop Alnwick was one of the large English party appointed to negotiate.⁶ He left London on 9 July, with permission to take abroad 2,000 marks worth of plate and funds,⁷ returning again on 17 September 1435.⁸ Alnwick's own role in the embassy is obscure. He may have been

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1. PPC, vol. III, pp 275-6. Alnwick may have returned by this date but he was still out of the country on 12 July (CPR 1422-9, p 414).
 2. Vickers, *Humphrey Duke of Gloucester*, pp 202-3.
 3. PPC, vol. IV, pp 69-70.
 4. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, pp 166-7. Ferguson (*English Diplomacy*, p 46) gives the date of ratification as 20 November. He claims that, despite these efforts, it was not until the reign of Henry VII that the two countries were finally able to reconcile their differences.
 5. Discussed fully by J.G. Dickinson, *The Congress of Arras, 1435. A Study in Medieval Diplomacy* (Oxford, 1955).
 6. *Foedera*, vol. V, part I, pp 18-9; BL: Add. Ms. 25459 (Hunter Collection, vol. I), ff 284-5.
 7. PPC, vol. IV, pp 301-2.
 8. PRO: Exchequer: Accounts, various (E 101): E 101/323/1-2. He received in advance £303 6s 8d for a quarter year, at 66s 8d a day (five marks), and having spent less than that time away had to repay £70 (*ibid.*, and PRO: Exchequer: Foreign Accounts (E 364): E 364/69 rot 3, m 1).

chosen because of the success of his previous mission to Burgundy but he, quite literally, took a back seat to Archbishop Kemp during the negotiations.¹ As is well known, the Congress was a disaster for the English, which resulted in the confirmation of the alliance between Charles VII and Philip of Burgundy which had already been agreed upon earlier in the year at Nevers.²

It is unlikely that Alnwick, or any of his colleagues, were blamed for their failure, which was seen as resulting from the perfidy of Burgundy. Certainly Alnwick's diplomatic career continued for a further few years. In February 1436, he was appointed with Bishops Langley and Lumley and Lord FitzHugh to treat with the Scots, although it is possible that he did not actually take part in the negotiations.³ His most significant mission at this time was as leader of the party appointed on 6 November 1436 to deal with Henry Vorrath, burgomaster of Danzig, and other envoys of the High Master of Prussia and the Hanseatic League.⁴ The resultant treaty, dated at London on 22 March, received royal confirmation on 7 June 1437.⁵ Although there is some debate about the advantages gained by this treaty, it did do something to ease the situation for England in the North Sea at a time when relations with Burgundy were hostile.⁶ While these negotiations were going on, Bishop Alnwick had been appointed, together with Lords Scrope and Tiptoft and Master John Storthwayt,

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1. When Kemp was unable to act his place was taken either by the bishop of Lisieux or the earl of Suffolk (Dickinson, *Congress*, pp 41-2). For a description of the seating arrangements, see *ibid.*, p 111.
 2. *Ibid.*, p 1.
 3. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp lxxxv, pp 308-15.
 4. PRO: C 81/1545/61; *Foedera*, vol. V, part I, pp 35-40. Alnwick's fellow commissaries included Lords Cromwell and Tiptoft and William Lyndwood.
 5. *CPR 1436-41*, p 62. PRO: Chancery Miscellanea (C 47): C 47/30/9/16 would appear to be a draft of this ratification.
 6. Ferguson, *English Diplomacy*, pp 95-107; T.H. Lloyd, 'A Reconsideration of Two Anglo-Hanseatic Treaties of the Fifteenth Century', *EHR*, vol. CII (1987), pp 916-33; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, pp 304-5 (a more positive view).

to treat with the ambassadors of the archbishop of Cologne about his pension,' agreement being reached in London on 28 February.²

Although Arras would seem to have been Bishop Alnwick's last major venture into French diplomacy, in April 1437, he, Archbishop Kemp, the earls of Warwick and Suffolk, and Lords Hungerford, Tiptoft and Fanhope, were appointed commissioners '*materia pace*',³ although the aims of this commission are obscure. This appears to have brought the bishop's diplomatic career to an end for, despite whatever abilities he displayed, he was not appointed to the embassy which negotiated with France through the duchess of Burgundy in 1439.⁴

William Alnwick's diplomatic career, which was, no doubt, assisted by his episcopal status, may well have begun because of his qualifications in civil law.⁵ His legal training was certainly useful for a number of other royal commissions he received. The most notable use of civil lawyers by the crown was in maritime cases.⁶ After becoming bishop, William Alnwick was appointed to hear appeals from the court of Admiralty on four occasions between 1426 and 1437.⁷ Furthermore, in January 1429, he was appointed, together with the mayor of Bishop's Lynn and three others, to

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1. C 81/1545/71, 31 January 1437.
 2. *Foedera*, vol. V, part I, pp 51-2. Ratified at Cologne on 27 April 1438 (*ibid.*).
 3. *PPC*, vol. V, pp 6-7.
 4. Davies' statement that he was (Ph.D., App. 1, p vii) was based on PRO: E 404/56/41, a warrant for issue for the bishop of Norwich serving as an ambassador. By 1439, this was, of course, Bishop Brouns. It is quite clear from the records used by C.T. Allmand, in 'The Anglo-French Negotiations, 1439', *BIHR*, vol. XL (1967), pp 1-33, that Alnwick was not there.
 5. The usefulness of a knowledge of Roman law for diplomacy is stressed in M. Blust 'The English Clerical Diplomats, 1327-1461', Loyola University of Chicago Ph.D. (1977), p 41. A more complicated view of Roman law's place in diplomacy is Ferguson, *English Diplomacy*, pp 146-57.
 6. Cf. Nigota 'John Kempe', p 53; Judd, *Bekynton*, p 25; Reeves, 'The Careers of William Lyndwood', p 200.
 7. *CPR* 1422-9, p 343; *CPR* 1429-36, pp 36, 304; *CPR* 1436-41, p 94. In every case, William Lyndwood was one of his fellow commissioners.

investigate the facts of a case concerning merchants of the town which had come before the king in chancery;¹ and in December 1433, he was appointed to judge a case which had been brought against the 'commons of the forest of Galtre' by the abbot and convent of St Mary's York.²

If the 'commons of Galtre' had attended the hearing held at Blackfriars on 5 December, their case might well have been decided by arbitration.³ This process was commonly used in this period to settle disagreements.⁴ On several occasions, Bishop Alnwick acted as an arbitrator in cases involving claims to land,⁵ but, as the famous case of his arbitration between the dean and chapter of Lincoln exhibits,⁶ arbitrations were not merely to do with secular land tenure. One of the lengthiest arbitrations that Alnwick was involved with was that between the dean and chapter of York and the master and brethren of the hospital of St Leonard, York concerning the right to tithes in the parish of Heslington. The final award of Alnwick and his colleague, the chancellor Bishop Stafford, was delayed in this case from July 1437 until Easter 1439.⁷ Arbitration was clearly not always easy.

In addition to these cases that were probably of no more than local importance, the bishop was involved in two arbitrations involving figures of national eminence. In February 1440, John, Lord Scrope and William, Lord FitzHugh bound themselves in 1,000

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1. *CPR* 1422-9, p 549.
 2. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 458-9. Also appointed were Bishop Morgan, the earls of Salisbury, Northumberland and Suffolk; Lords Tiptoft and Hungerford; and the three justices William Cheyne, William Babyngton and John Juyn.
 3. It would seem that originally the earl of Salisbury had been appointed to make an award between the parties.
 4. Powell, 'Arbitration and the Law in England'. See especially pp 53-4 for the influence of ecclesiastical practice on this procedure.
 5. Witchell, 'John Kemp', pp 75-6 (1427); *CCR* 1429-36, p 472 (1429); *CCR* 1441-7, pp 58-9 (1442).
 6. See above, pp 36-43.
 7. *CCR* 1435-41, pp 130-1, 166-8, 189-90, 246.

marks each to abide by an arbitration concerning the title to manors of Scrope's brother, Henry, which had been awarded to FitzHugh by Henry V after Henry Scrope's attainder for treason in 1415.¹ FitzHugh's chosen arbitrators were Bishop Aiscough and Richard, earl of Salisbury.² Scrope chose Humphrey, earl of Stafford and Bishop Alnwick. If these arbitrators failed to reach agreement, then the duke of Gloucester and Cardinal Beaufort were to mediate. It would thus seem that if Alnwick and Scrope were not on the best of terms in the early part of the minority³ relations had improved by this date. Evidently too, it was considered that, despite their differences, Gloucester and Beaufort could work together. Of greatest importance perhaps at this period was the arbitration in the famous dispute between the two Neville earls of Westmorland and Salisbury.⁴ On 28 May 1438, they gave recognisances of £4,000 each to abide by the award of Archbishop Kemp, Bishop Alnwick, Lord Hungerford and William Lyndwood. This case demonstrates that arbitration was not infallible, and within a few months the quarrel had flared up again.⁵

It seems that arbitrators were not always chosen directly by the parties to a quarrel. It was by royal commission that, in May 1427, Bishop Alnwick, together with Archbishop Chichele and Bishop Morgan, was chosen to decide a case between John Pecche, abbot of the Cistercian convent of St Mary of the Graces, and Pascal Gylot, a monk of the same house.⁶ Other royal commissions undertaken by Bishop Alnwick were, of their nature, very miscellaneous, ranging from the almost private, single event of confirming the provision

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1. CCR 1435-41, p 358.
 2. The earl of Salisbury was replaced by Suffolk in May (*ibid.*, p 373).
 3. See above, pp 298-9.
 4. On this dispute see, for example, Storey, *End of the House of Lancaster*, pp 105-23.
 5. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 268, considers this unsurprising as the group of arbitrators 'so evidently lacked the requisite impartiality'.
 6. PRO: C 81/1544/71.

of the new bishop of Worcester, Thomas Bouchier,¹ to the taking of county-wide oaths from notable subjects not to maintain peace breakers.²

The decision to administer this oath had been taken in the parliament of 1433 when, at the request of the commons, it had been sworn to by all the lords in parliament. As bishop, William Alnwick was *ipso facto*, a lord qualified for individual summons to all parliaments. Whether or not he was a member of the continual council, a lord, spiritual or temporal, was required to give his counsel to the king when summoned to a parliament or great council. It would seem that, on the whole, bishops were, in contrast to their temporal peers, conscientious attenders of parliament.³ Bishop Alnwick was no exception. His presence was recorded in all parliaments between 1426 and 1442.⁴ In addition, his itinerary indicates, despite the exemption he gained in 1442, that he was also present, for at least some of the time, at the parliaments of 1445-6 and 1449.⁵ Indeed the only parliament for which there is some doubt about his attendance was that held at Bury St Edmunds in 1447. As an assiduous attender, it is not surprising to find him being appointed proctor for fellow bishops who, for one reason or another could not attend.⁶

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1. On 15 April 1435, Alnwick, Sir Ralph Botiller and Sir John Stywood certified to William Lyndwood KPS that on 11 April, at Gloucester, Bouchier had presented them with his bulls of provision and that on the 14th he had disavowed the words in the bull prejudicial to the king (PRO: E 28/55).
 2. CPR 1429-36, pp 370, 404-7. On 1 May 1434 Bishop Alnwick was commissioned to take the oaths for Norfolk together with the knights of the shire. Cf. Storey, 'Marmaduke Lumley', p 123.
 3. Davies, Ph.D., pp 607-8; J.S. Roskell 'The Problem of Attendance of the Lords in Medieval Parliaments', *BIHR*, vol. XXIX (1956), pp 153-204. Reprinted in *Parliament and Politics*, vol. I.
 4. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 299-300, 317, 336, 368, 380, 420-2, 482, 496, 506-7; vol. V, p 10, 35; Davies, Ph.D., App., pp cccxxiii-iv.
 5. See Appendix VII. This casts some doubt on Roskell's methods of calculation.
 6. Bishop Langley employed him as proctor for the parliament of 1437 (*Register of Thomas Langley*, ed. Storey, vol. IV, p 210), and Bishop Spofford of Hereford appointed him as one of his proctors for the parliament and convocation of 1442 (PRO: Parliamentary proxies (SC 10): SC 10/50/2469).

Once at parliament what kind of role did he play? As has been noted above,¹ his one opportunity to deliver the opening sermon was denied him. However, in most of the parliaments he attended he acted as a trier of petitions. In 1427, 1431, 1432, 1433, 1435, 1437 and 1442 he was appointed a trier of Gascony petitions, perhaps in recognition of his experience in France; and on one occasion, 1429, he was a trier of English petitions.² On two occasions, in 1428 and 1437, he was on the committee appointed to consider those petitions which the parliament had not time to consider.³

However important parliament was for the hearing of petitions and the receiving of counsel, as far as the royal government was concerned a prime function was to raise revenue by convincing the commons of the need to grant a subsidy. On two occasions, in 1426 and 1441, Bishop Alnwick was appointed to collect a lay subsidy.⁴ These would seem to have been exceptional cases. The usual collectors of lay subsidies were men of lesser status. It was perhaps more normal for the bishop to be commissioned, together with the local members of parliament, to distribute monies to those areas exempted from the collections.⁵ On two occasions, in 1436 and 1440, he was commissioned to hold an enquiry pursuant to the grant of a subsidy.⁶

Whatever his involvement in the collection of lay subsidies, Bishop Alnwick's major connection with the raising of royal

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1. See above, pp 302-3.
 2. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 317, 336, 368, 380, 420, 482, 496; vol. V, p 36.
 3. *Ibid.*, vol. IV, pp 334, 506-7.
 4. PRO: E 28/47 (23 July 1426): draft letters patent appointing him, together with the duke of Exeter, Sir Thomas Erpingham and Sir William Philip to collect the subsidy in Norfolk and Suffolk; *CFR* 1436-41, p 573 (18 February 1441): commissioning him, John, Viscount Beaumont, Sir Thomas Cumberworth, Walter Tailboys, John Langholme, the sheriff and collectors to collect a quarter of the subsidy granted in the last parliament in Lincolnshire.
 5. *CFR* 1430-7, pp 185-96 (with the knights of the city of Norwich, for Norwich, 27 December 1433 and 1 February 1434); pp 350-7 (with the knights of the county, for Rutland, 20, 27 May 1437).
 6. *CFR* 1430-7, pp 257-61, 267-9; *PPC*, vol. V, p 421.

revenues was, like his fellow bishops, in the levying of clerical subsidies. Generally, at the same time as parliament was held, a convocation of the clergy of the Canterbury province would be sitting, one of the prime aims being, as far as the king was concerned, the granting of a subsidy.¹ After such a subsidy was granted, the exchequer officials would write to the bishop, or his vicar general, instructing him to appoint collectors for his diocese and requiring a certificate both of their names and of any exemptions to the subsidy that should be allowed.² Having appointed his collectors, Bishop Alnwick would then inform the treasurer and barons of the exchequer of both the names of his appointed collectors and any exemptions from the subsidy.³ The appointment of collectors was not the end of the bishop's involvement. As has been seen,⁴ the collectors might not wish to act, in which case the bishop had to be prepared to do battle. Also, the exchequer might embark on quite lengthy correspondence with the bishop and his officials to ascertain the true extent of various claimed exemptions.⁵ Evidently the raising of subsidies was one of the less congenial episcopal tasks.

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1. See Heath, *Church and Realm*, pp 50, 88, 101, 115, 146, 246, 282, 332.
 2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, pp cxxiii-cxxvi. Commissions to the bishop are to be found in: *CFR* 1422-30, pp 149-50 (1426), 269-71 (1429), 306-9 (1430); *CFR* 1430-37, pp 62-4 (1431), 159-61 (1433), 227-30 (1435), 269-72 (1436); *CFR* 1437-45, pp 12-14 (1437), 135-7 (1440), 244-6 (1442), 310-3 (1445); *CFR* 1445-52, pp 61-3 (1446). Examples of episcopal letters appointing collectors are: BL: Add. Ms. 14848 f 193 (appointment of Clement Denston to collect in his archdeaconry, 4 February 1436), 302-3v (appointment of Abbot Curteys collector for the same subsidy, 12 February 1436).
 3. For example, PRO: E 159/211, Recorda section, Easter term, rot xvj ff, contain Bishop Alnwick's certificate of 20 March 1435 informing the barons that he had appointed the prior and convent of West Acre collectors in the archdeaconries of Norwich and Norfolk, and the prior and convent of Mendham collectors in Suffolk and Sudbury. The certificate was accompanied by a list of exemptions to which further additions were made on 10 November 1435 and 2 November 1436.
 4. See above, pp 249-52, 278-9. See also McHardy, 'Clerical Taxation'.
 5. See, for example, *Norw. Reg.*, ff 97, 111v, 112v.

As is well known, the Lancastrian kings, with the partial exception of Henry V, had the continual problem of living outside their means. Such subsidies as were grudgingly granted by their subjects were not sufficient to keep government and the campaign in France afloat. Consequently, they resorted to loans, real and fictitious.¹ Bishop Alnwick assisted in a number of ways. In 1436, he was one of many recipients of privy seal letters requesting loans to support the duke of York's forthcoming expedition.² He responded on this occasion with a loan of 100 marks. Between 1426 and 1449, he made several loans of this order.³ In all, he lent something in the region of just under £1,000. This total, while nowhere near approaching the amounts lent by Cardinal Beaufort or even Archbishop Chichele,⁴ is indicative, even if some of the loans were fictitious, of the bishop's willingness to support the crown and of his investment in its policies.

Repayment of such loans was not always assured. Bishop Alnwick himself received £233 worth of bad tallies in his ten years as keeper of the privy seal (1422-32).⁵ It is not surprising, therefore, that those who lent a good deal were anxious for some guarantee of repayment. Bishop Alnwick himself stood surety for repayment of loans made by Cardinal Beaufort in 1426 and 1431,⁶ and in 1435-6 he was one of those enfeoffed with the lands of the duke of Bedford and Lord Arundel to ensure the repayment of 8,000 marks

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1. K.B. McFarlane, 'Loans to the Lancastrian Kings, the Problem of Inducement', *England in the Fifteenth Century. Collected Essays*, ed. G.L. Harriss (1981), pp 57-78.
 2. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 316-22.
 3. PRO: E 403/689 m 10; E 403/696 m 1; E 403/725 m 10; E 403/735 m 2; E 401/814 m 1; *CPR* 1429-36, pp 466-7.
 4. George, 'The English Episcopate', p 156, has calculated that in the period 1437-50 Alnwick ranked eighth out of the twenty-five bishops lending to the crown, after Beaufort, Chichele, Lacy, Aiscough, Kemp, Stafford and Moleyns.
 5. A. Steel, *The Receipt of the Exchequer, 1377-1485* (Cambridge, 1954) pp 184, 187. Two of these, one for £100 and one for £41 5s 4d, were recorded on the issue rolls of 1432-3 (E 403/703 m 9; E 403/706 m 16).
 6. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 199-200; PRO: SC 8/144/7180-7182.

lent by William Estfield, Hamo Sutton and Hugh Dyke.¹ Moreover, as one of the leading lords of his dioceses, Bishop Alnwick was an obvious choice for the occasions when it was decided to issue commissions to raise loans. In 1426, he and all the bishops of the Canterbury province were commissioned to raise loans from the clergy, religious and secular, of their dioceses, and at the same time he was commissioned with secular notables of the area to raise loans in East Anglia.² He received similar commissions in 1430, 1434 and 1436;³ and in 1440-1 he was commissioned to raise loans in Lincolnshire.⁴

Such local commissions presupposed that Bishop Alnwick was known in, and knew, his dioceses. Without such knowledge he could not expect to be very effective. The most prominent local use made of the bishops during Henry VI's reign was in their appointment to the commissions of the peace. This was 'a striking innovation' of the minority council, reflecting, suggests Harriss, Cardinal Beaufort's own view of episcopal responsibilities.⁵ It has been suggested that increased use of someone on local commissions might indicate some loss of influence at the centre of government.⁶ This would not seem to be true for Bishop Alnwick, whose first appointments came soon after his consecration and some years before his resignation from the privy seal. As bishop of Norwich, he was a frequent member of the commissions for Norfolk, Bishops Lynn, and Suffolk.⁷ As bishop of Lincoln, he was a member of the commissions for Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Oxfordshire and Rutland.⁸ It has been suggested that, despite such

1. *CPR 1429-36*, p 498; *RP*, vol. IV, pp 484-6; PRO: E 404/52/371.

2. *CPR 1422-9*, pp 352-5.

3. *CPR 1429-36*, pp 50, 354, 528-30.

4. *CPR 1436-41*, pp 504-5, 536-7.

5. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 145. This innovation dates from the commission issued on 20 July 1424 (*CPR 1422-9*, pp 554-73).

6. Roskell, 'Tiptoft', p 143.

7. *CPR 1422-9*, pp 566-7, 570; *CPR 1429-36*, pp 621, 625; *CPR 1436-41*, pp 586-7, 590-1. See table XI.

8. *CPR 1436-41*, pp 578, 584-9; *CPR 1441-6*, pp 472-5; *CPR 1446-52*, pp 590-1. George, 'The Episcopate', pp 116-7, has calculated that for the period 1437-50 his total number of commissions was only surpassed by Archbishops Kemp and Stafford - perhaps not surprising given the size of the Lincoln diocese.

commissions, the bishops never actually acted as justices.' This seems most unlikely. If the government did not require the bishops to act, why did it issue commissions to them? In Bishop Alnwick's case, it can be shown to be untrue. He certainly acted at least while he was bishop of Norwich. His Norwich register records several bonds for good behaviour made before him as a justice of the peace, together with correspondence about such bonds with the exchequer in the years 1433-4,² and, on a more prosaic note, the accounts of the master of the cellar of Norwich cathedral priory twice record buying food '*pro domino episcopo....justiciario*'.³

Thus Davies was probably right to assert that 'both crown and hierarchy probably saw the bishops' principal public and private interests as....in their own localities'.⁴ It is surely significant that one of the few occasions when Bishop Alnwick is recorded as having expressed an opinion in council was when the troubles of Norwich were being discussed.⁵ A bishop, particularly one so well known to central government as William Alnwick, was a useful man to have in the provinces. Here truly, especially with men such as Alnwick who had no noticeable family connections, was a powerful local lord who could be expected to put service to the king above family and factional infighting.

It should not, however, be forgotten that he was, primarily, an ecclesiastical rather than a temporal lord. As such he could also be useful to the king as a potential source of patronage for the crown. Pressure to use such patronage to reward royal servants might come directly. For example, on 1 May 1426, the king (in fact the council) nominated to Alnwick one Thomas Frank to receive the pension which 'by reason of his new creation' the bishop was bound

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1. A suggestion made by Dr. C. Carpenter in discussion following her paper 'Reflections of a Late Medieval Local Historian' at the IHR on 24 February 1989.
 2. Norw. Reg., f 96-96v.
 3. NRO: DCN 1/1/80 (account for 1431-2 - included with the bishop was another J.P., Simon Felbrigge), and DCN 1/1/81 (account for 1436-7. The bishop is described as '*iam Lincolnensis*').
 4. Davies, Ph.D., pp 643-4.
 5. PPC, vol. V, pp 67-8, 76; PRO: E 28/63 (13 December 1439).

to grant to one of the king's clerks until he could provide him with a benefice.¹ Such pressure could also be indirect. Alnwick knew from experience that royal clerks needed benefices, preferably without cure of souls, to be able to support themselves. His collation of Lincoln prebends to such men as William Lyndwood, John Arundel, Nicholas Dixon and William Sprever, is an indication of his response to such knowledge.² Nevertheless, he was probably free to choose which of the many royal servants clamouring for benefices he should patronise.

Lest it be considered that bishops were only valued for their administrative skills, temporal power, or resources of patronage, it should be remembered that their authority was also, perhaps even primarily, seen as spiritual. This is illustrated by the council's discussions about the defence of Guienne and Normandy in 1443, when Cardinal Kemp 'stured the king that he wold write his lettres under prive seel unto the bisshops of this his lande to sture theim to prayer etc'.³ His prayers were not the least of the services that Bishop Alnwick could render to Henry VI.⁴

1. CCR 1422-9, p 260. Cf. Heath, *Church and Realm*, pp 32, 100.

2. Linc. Reg., ff 107, 109-10.

3. PPC, vol. V, p 224. Similarly, on 12 March 1444, Archbishop Stafford ordered the bishop of London to circulate instructions for prayers for the security and prosperity of church and realm (LPL: Register Stafford, f 14).

4. For the employment of the church in prayer and propaganda, see Heath, *Church and Realm*, pp 107-10, 231, 279-81.

4. Bishop Alnwick, the Church in England and Christendom

William Alnwick was not only a royal servant, nor even a diocesan to his spiritual flock. As a bishop he had a place in the hierarchy of the English church and also of the church universal. In the English church his closest contacts were naturally with his fellow bishops, many of whom were his colleagues from his earliest days of service to the king, some probably having been his fellow students at Cambridge. For ecclesiastical administration to work smoothly in England, it was necessary for the bishops to co-operate with each other. This was perhaps most regularly displayed in their acting as each other's commissaries in the exchange of benefices between their dioceses,¹ and in their ordination of each other's parishioners on the receipt of properly attested letters dimissory.² This was the routine work of episcopal co-operation. Bishops were also able to seek each other's assistance in disciplinary measures. For example, in June 1443, Alnwick asked Bishop Spofford of Hereford to send a man who had deserted his wife back to the Lincoln diocese; and in 1446 he asked Bishop Gilbert of London to cite the sheriff of Hertfordshire, who had neglected to arrest an excommunicate, to appear before Alnwick.³ These commissions worked both ways. In 1429, Bishop Spofford exhibited complete trust in Alnwick by commissioning him to nominate candidates for benefices lying in the bishop of Hereford's collation while he was out of the country.⁴ Spofford also appointed Alnwick his proctor for convocation and parliament on

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1. Many examples of this are found in both of Bishop Alnwick's registers. See also *The Register of Bishop Bekynton, Bishop of Bath and Wells*, ed. H.C. Maxwell-Lyte and M.C.B. Dawes, 2 vols, Somerset Record Society, vols XLIX, L (1934-5), vol. I, pp 95-6; *The Register of Richard Fleming, Bishop of Lincoln, 1420-31*, ed. N.H. Bennett, vol. I, Canterbury and York Society, vol. LXXIII (1984), p 44; etc.
 2. For example, on 18 September 1428, Bishop Langley's suffragan, ordained one Clement Blake of the Norwich diocese, equipped with Alnwick's letters dimissory (*Register of Thomas Langley*, ed. R.L. Storey, vol. III, p 96).
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 37v, 68.
 4. *Registrum Thome Spofford*, ed. Bannister, p 117.

several occasions.¹ That such a man, whose register reveals perhaps the most saintly character then inhabiting the episcopal bench, should place such trust in a man with whom he appears to have had little official contact, speaks highly of Alnwick's reputation among his peers.

An indication of intimacy with his fellow bishops is perhaps revealed by his part in the consecration of three of his colleagues. In 1430, he and Bishop Langdon assisted John Kemp in the consecration of Bishop Lumley at Canterbury;² and later he presided at two consecrations which reveal his intimate involvement with the king's royal foundations. In 1443, assisted by Bishops Aiscough and Ashby, he consecrated Bishop Beckington in the old collegiate church of St Mary's Eton;³ and on 7 May 1447, under commission from Archbishop Stafford, he consecrated John Langton as Bishop of St Davids in the chapel of the king's new college at Cambridge.⁴ Episcopal friendships are further reflected in their acting as executors for each other;⁵ and Bishop Alnwick's friendship with William Aiscough is vividly illustrated in a message tacked onto a letter to the newly appointed bishop of Salisbury: 'No more I wryte to zowe my lord atte the tyme bot I beseche zowe recomaund and excuse me to my lord of Lincoln that I come naught and sawe his gode lordeship as be hight zowe for truly I was so desesyed I myght nought wele ryde that day...'.⁶ That the episcopate could work together in small things as well as great is illustrated by the indulgence granted in November 1427 to those contributing to the maintenance of a bridge at Sherington, Buckinghamshire, by both archbishops and fifteen suffragans.⁷

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1. *Ibid.*, pp 86, 201, 218, 220. For Spofford's 'pious withdrawal', see Haines, 'William Gray', p 439.
 2. Borthwick Institute: Register 19 (John Kempe 1426-52), f 17. But see *Visitations* II, p 406, and above, p 299.
 3. *Register of Thomas Bekynton*, ed. Maxwell-Lyte, vol. I, p 1.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 67; LPL: Register Stafford, f 26.
 5. See also *Provinciale*, p 230, for their obligation to recite the office of the dead for their brother bishops.
 6. PRO: Ancient Correspondence (SC 1): SC 1/44/94 (Good Friday 1438). The name of the correspondent is missing.
 7. *Register of Thomas Langley*, ed. Storey, vol. III, pp 56-7.

The archbishops were, of course, more than simply fellow bishops. Both William Alnwick's dioceses were in the southern province and so he owed allegiance to his metropolitan, the archbishop of Canterbury, an allegiance confirmed in the oath of obedience he offered to Archbishop Chichele at his consecration.¹ In effect, a bishop was left very much to administer his diocese as he saw fit, but if he was found in any way wanting the archbishop had power to supersede his jurisdiction. The bishop's jurisdiction would also be suspended if the archbishop chose to make a metropolitan visitation.² There are some signs that Archbishop Stafford intended to commence a visitation in March 1444,³ but there is little evidence that either of Alnwick's two dioceses underwent such visitation during his episcopate.

In some areas, the jurisdictions of archbishop and bishop overlapped. In the fourteenth century, bishops of Lincoln had claimed, against the norm, probate jurisdiction over their parishioners having goods in several dioceses, by reason of their possessions in the diocese of Lincoln. The agreement then reached had been that the bishop had probate but that the last account and final absolution of executors was to be approved by the archbishop.⁴ That this compromise still obtained during Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate is illustrated by the probate of the will of Sir John Cornwall, Lord Fanhope, jointly, and it would seem harmoniously, undertaken by Bishop Alnwick and Archbishop Stafford in January 1444 '*in quadam camera retractu videlicet ad magnam et principalem cameram infra manerium sive castrum de Ampthull in fenestra occidentale eiusdem retractus*'.⁵

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1. Norw. Reg., f 18. Their intimacy is perhaps shown by Chichele's personal consecration of Alnwick at Canterbury (*The Chronicle of John Stone, 1415-1471*, ed. W.G. Searle, Cambridge Antiquarian Society Publications, vol. XXXIV (1902), p 20).
 2. *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, pp 160-352.
 3. *Ibid.*, p 345.
 4. *Ibid.*, p 384.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 3-6, 21v-22. Stafford's copy of this probate (LPL: Register Stafford, ff 119v-120v) perhaps indicates that he was not entirely happy with the situation. It mentions neither Bishop Alnwick's claims nor his presence. Stafford's presence in the diocese of Lincoln at this time might indicate that he did at least start a metropolitanical visitation.

The archbishop could interfere in episcopal administration in two ways: either by issuing direct instructions to the bishop or by countenancing appeals from the bishop's jurisdiction to his own court of Canterbury, popularly known as the court of Arches.¹ A number of cases went on appeal from Bishop Alnwick to the court of Arches, most notably several concerning disputes at Lincoln cathedral.² In all cases the officials of the court of Arches seem to have judged Bishop Alnwick to have been in the right. This would seem to indicate either the reliability of the justice administered by Alnwick and his ministers, or the solidarity between the archbishop and his suffragans and their officials against the pretensions of religious prelates, such as Abbots Curteys and Whethamstede, and overbearing secular clerks like Macworth.³

Occasionally, it would seem, Bishop Alnwick could, of himself, remit to the archbishop acts he might well have undertaken. For example, in January 1452, the pope confirmed a union of churches which had come before Bishop Alnwick. He, alleging himself otherwise engaged, had remitted it to Canterbury, and the union had been undertaken by William Witham, the archbishop's commissary.⁴ Conversely, the archbishop might commission his suffragan to act, as illustrated by Alnwick's citation at Chichele's request of the executors of Thomas Montagu, earl of Salisbury, to appear before him in May 1437.⁵ This was an individual commission and so presumably came directly from Canterbury. When the archbishop wished to contact his suffragans *en masse* he would write to the bishop of London who would then, in his capacity as dean of the province, relay the message to his brother bishops instructing them to return any required certificates to himself.⁶

1. *Canterbury Admin.*, vol. I, pp 124-47, etc.

2. See above, pp 52-5.

3. See above, pp 245-6; and also *Visitations* II, p lx. It is worth remembering that for much of the period of Alnwick's episcopates, William Lyndwood and Thomas Beckington were active in the court of Arches.

4. *CPL*, 1447-55, pp 230-1.

5. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 32v-3 (Alnwick was supervisor of this will).

6. *Canterbury Admin.*, vol., pp 355-6.

The dean of the province was frequently employed in this way for issuing summons to convocation and promulgating ordinances agreed in it. Only once is such a summons recorded in either of William Alnwick's episcopal registers. It is perhaps significant that this was the summons to the convocation of July 1428, which was to be much occupied by the question of heresy, a problem which the bishop was at that moment setting out to tackle in his own diocese.¹ Bishop Alnwick is recorded as having attended all meetings of the Canterbury convocation at St Paul's cathedral between 1428 and 1439, except for the meeting held in February-March 1431.² This may well be a fault of the record as he was certainly in London at the time.³ Unfortunately, there does not survive anything like a full record of attendance for those meetings that took place in 1435 and between 1440 and 1449.⁴ Nevertheless, Alnwick's itinerary indicates that it is at least possible that he attended all the convocations of the Canterbury province during the period.

As far as the king was concerned, the main purpose of asking the archbishop to call a convocation was to raise a clerical subsidy. Bishop Alnwick, as a royal servant, may well have sympathised with this view. However, as far as the archbishop was concerned, it was an opportunity to receive the counsel of the clergy of his province, primarily, of course, his fellow bishops. Indeed, in convocation were discussed many of the major questions of the day, from the problems of impoverished scholars and the augmentation of vicarages to the threats to the universal church from Lollardy, the Hussites and the Turks.

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1. Norw. Reg., ff 98v-99. The register records the bishop's certificate addressed to Archbishop Chichele reciting both the bishop of London's letter to Norwich and his own letter from Canterbury, together with a list of those prelates of the diocese and representatives of the clergy who were to attend. Bishop Alnwick's summons to the 1439 convocation is preserved among his visitation records (*Visitations* II, p 400).
 2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 185, 189, 191, 196, 210, 212, 218-28, 230, 242, 245, 247-8, 250-1, 253, 258, 261, 278-82, 285.
 3. See Appendix VII.
 4. 1435, 1442, 1444, 1446 and 1449 (*HBC*, pp 602-3). Surviving records are in *Concilia Magnae Britanniae et Hiberniae*, ed. D. Wilkins, vol. III, 1350-1545 (1737), pp 539-57.

Bishop Alnwick was present during many of these discussions but, as with the continual council and parliament, it is not easy to ascertain what role, if any, he actually played in convocation. The years of his greatest activity would appear to have been in 1438-9. In October 1438, a dispute between a Master Philip Norreys and the four priors provincial of the mendicant orders came before convocation. It was decided to submit these to arbitration, the priors choosing the bishop of St Davids, and Norreys Bishop Alnwick, who were added to the other three arbitrators, the archbishop and the bishops of Norwich and Rochester.¹ A year later, on 21 November 1439, because Chichele was too ill to attend, Bishop Alnwick was commissioned to preside at the opening ceremonies with the bishops of London and Norwich.²

According to E.F. Jacob, the convocations of Henry Chichele's archiepiscopate resulted in the promulgation of sixteen constitutions.³ One of these, the ordinance for the promotion of graduates, reissued in 1438, is recorded in Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln register, together with his order for its publication to his commissary general in Leicestershire.⁴ This does not mean that Alnwick disobeyed any other orders he might have received to publish such ordinances. Nevertheless, it may indicate that the education of the clergy was close to his heart, a view strengthened by the fact that in 1444 he ordered John Leek to publish the thirteenth-century constitution '*Ignorancia sacerdotum*' in the Huntingdon archdeaconry.⁵

Orders to publish such constitutions usually came, like summons to convocation, from Canterbury via London. A similar route was used to order solemn processions and services of invocation for the victory of good over evil. Three such events are recorded in Bishop Alnwick's registers. In February 1447, the bishop of London

1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 275, 278. See also *BRVO*, vol. II, pp 1365-6.

2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 279.

3. *Ibid.*, vol. I, pp cxliv-clii.

4. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 33-4.

5. *Ibid.*, ff 51v-52. See *Provinciale*, pp 54-63, and Heath, *Parish Clergy*, p 93.

passed on letters from Archbishop Stafford asking the bishops to organise processions in their cathedrals and other churches for the peace of the realm.¹ This crisis was of a purely national nature. The other two calls for processions came from the pope for international purposes. In 1428, the cause was the suppression of the Bohemian Hussites, and, in 1447, Pope Nicholas V wrote announcing his election and requesting prayers of intercession for the success of his pontificate.²

This request from Nicholas serves as a reminder of the intimate connections between the constituent parts of the catholic church. The pope may have been remote physically from his brother bishops in England, but they were in constant reciprocal communication.³ The pope was the eventual source (on earth) of Bishop Alnwick's spiritual power. Alnwick might have owed his promotion to secular service, but without papal provision and translation he would never have gained his episcopates. As Alnwick was the fount of grace to his parishioners, so the pope was to Alnwick. Having translated the bishop from Norwich to Lincoln,⁴ Eugenius IV commissioned Archbishop Chichele and Bishop Gilbert to take Bishop Alnwick's oath of allegiance, thus saving him the necessity of travelling to Rome,⁵ and granted Alnwick the faculty to visit his diocese by deputy for three years.⁶ Alnwick was also granted the right to pass on patronage to his own favourites, being enabled, in 1441, to

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1. Linc. Reg, ff 71v-2.
 2. Norw. Reg, ff 99; Linc. Reg ff 75. A further international call would seem to be recorded in the statement by Lincoln cathedral's clerk of the common in his account for 1440-1 that he had paid 3s 4d '*nuncio domini Lincolniensis Episcopi pro portacione unius littere de processione generali pro [?aeris tempore?] nec non pro rege pace et scismate cedenda*' (LAO: Bj 2/12, f 10). This may have been related to the union of the Roman and Greek churches at the council of Florence.
 3. This is vividly illustrated throughout the calendars of papal letters.
 4. For Alnwick's arrangements for the payment of his 5,000 florins *servitia*, see Lunt, *Papal Revenues*, vol. 1, pp 284-6. See also *ibid.*, pp 82-91 on *servitia*.
 5. CPL, vol. VIII, p 285.
 6. *Ibid.*, p 261. Some indication perhaps of Alnwick's level of involvement in government at this time.

make John Bugg a notary public, and in 1442 to dispense Thomas Ryngstede to farm out his benefices while in the bishop's service.¹

The papal curia was not merely a source of patronage. Frequently Bishop Alnwick was commissioned to act by the pope. This might involve the fairly simple task of confirming papal dispensations,² or executing a ruling of the papal curia.³ It might, however, involve the bishop in the more arduous task of investigating some subject of an appeal to the pope.⁴ Such commissions indicate that, even if the pope knew nothing personally of Alnwick's character and abilities, he was at least ready to trust in the judgement of a man in his position. Indeed papal government would not have worked without such trust. This is illustrated in the bull confirming Tattershall's privileges, where Ralph Cromwell was given the power to make statutes for the college provided that they seemed reasonable to the bishop.⁵

Of course, if William Alnwick could be commissioned to investigate a case which had been the cause of an appeal from another ecclesiastical court, the pope could also receive appeals from Alnwick's own judgements and those of his officials. It says much for the justice exercised in Bishop Alnwick's courts that in none of the very few cases that were appealed to the pope, the most

1. *CPL*, vol. IX, pp 228, 259.

2. For example: *CPL*, vol. VIII, pp 80, 165-6, 285, 502, 578, 661; *CPL*, vol. IX, pp 63, 284, 512, 563; *CPL*, vol. X, pp 25, 90.

3. For example: *CPL*, vol. IX, pp 134-5, 541; *CPL*, vol. X, pp 18-9, 42, 414-6.

4. For example: *CPL*, vol. VII, p 526 (the complaint of Archbishop Kemp (1427) that the dean and chapter of York had refused to let him have the fruits of the church); *CPL*, vol. VIII, p 545 (to investigate a marriage, 1435); *CPL*, vol. IX, p 282 (1442: to investigate the complaint of the king that Westminster abbey and other places were being used as sanctuary by wrong doers. Could this be connected with the case of the duchess of Gloucester who took sanctuary at Westminster in 1441?), 440 (1444: a marriage ruling).

5. *CPL*, vol. IX, p 163.

famous of course being that of Macworth,¹ was the final judgement against him.²

It would be wrong to assume that the relations between Bishop Alnwick (or any bishop) and the pope were simply those of bland indifference of two cogs in a well oiled machine. It is unlikely that Alnwick and any pope had any personal knowledge of each other.³ However, the presence of a papal collector and other papal representatives in England meant that the pope could receive first hand, if biased, impressions of the character of the episcopate. It is pretty clear that Piero da Monte disliked Bishop Alnwick. His hard words about him reveal how he despised both Alnwick's lack of elegant manner and his steady refusal to transgress the statutes of Provisors.⁴ This low esteem reflects both the frustration da Monte experienced in his attempts to obtain a Lincoln prebend for Eugenius' nephew Peter Barbo, and also his embarrassment in revealing his failure to the papal curia.⁵ Alnwick's attitude to Provisors is difficult to assess. He was one of those who, in 1427, supported the release of the papal collector who had brought the bulls suspending Archbishop Chichele's legatine status,⁶ and, no doubt, he was one of the suffragans who appealed with Chichele for the revocation of the statute in the parliament of 1428.⁷ This does not, however, mean that he welcomed papal interference in his powers of collation.

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1. See above, pp 54-6.
 2. *CPL*, vol. VII, pp 502-3; *CPL*, vol. IX, p 481; *CPL*, vol. X, pp 18-9, 31-5. A more cynical judgement might be that it was an indication of his political muscle, the way the English episcopate stuck together, and the corruption of the papal court!
 3. It is, however, fascinating to speculate what the rather dour Alnwick thought of the future Pius II, whom he may well have met at Arras, where the latter served as Cardinal Alberghati's secretary (Ferguson, *English Diplomacy*, p 135).
 4. Haller, *Piero da Monte*, pp 73-8.
 5. See above, pp 68-9. On similar papal difficulties with other bishops, see Davies, 'Martin V and the English Episcopate', especially pp 339-44; Maxwell-Lyte (ed.), *Register of Bishop Bekynnton*, vol. I, p xxii.
 6. *PPC*, vol. III, p 268 - together with all the other bishops on the council but against his colleagues Cromwell, Hungerford and Tiptoft.
 7. Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*, p 52.

Nevertheless, his disobedience to the pope in this one matter should not be taken as indication that he was a radical conciliarist. What was his attitude to and contact with the councils of the period? Not much can be deduced of his attitude to the council of Pavia-Siena, although as late as 1428 collections were being made in his diocese to support the English delegation.¹ One suspects, though, that he had some sympathy with Bishop Fleming in his battles there with Abbot Whethamstede. The council of Basle, naturally, impinged more on the consciousness of Englishmen. Alnwick was present during several discussions in the royal council about Basle,² and it seems likely that he concurred with the consensus English view that the council was worth supporting only in so far as it did not prove disobedient to the pope. In 1432, he contributed to the subsidy allocated to the English delegation in convocation but complained to Archbishop Chichele that the archiepiscopal mandate for collection had arrived too late for him to be able to return the contribution of the Norwich diocese by the appointed deadline.³ He does not appear to have been one of those bishops who sent personal delegates,⁴ but the delegation sent by convocation had a number of members who would have been well known to him, including William Worsted, the prior of the cathedral church of Norwich.⁵ The two would, no doubt, have agreed on the necessity of crushing the Bohemian Hussites, but it is unlikely that they would have concurred in the matter that seems to have troubled the regulars most, the attacks on the exemptions of monastic houses.⁶

Bishop Alnwick was not, however, totally dependent on second hand reports for his view of the great international events and characters of his day. In his three-months sojourn at Arras, he would have met the representatives of both pope and council, some of them among the greatest minds of the period. It would be wrong

1. Norw. Reg, f 98.

2. For example: *PPC*, vol. V, pp 64-8, 98-9, 102.

3. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 238-40.

4. *PPC*, vol. V, p 90; Davies, Ph.D., pp 597-8.

5. *RP*, vol. IV, p 472.

6. See above, pp 60, 253-4.

to take da Monte's view of this '*rusticanus homo*' too much to heart and judge that he neither knew nor cared about the great concerns of the church universal of his age. The only diocesan synod recorded in either of his registers was that he called in the conveniently central town of Northampton, in April 1445, to plead for clerical contributions to the voluntary subsidy granted in convocation to protect Christian places against Muslim attacks.²

The appearance of this record in the register, as much as the bishop's swift response to the appeal,³ indicate that Bishop Alnwick was not merely a provincial prelate concerned only with local affairs. He was also a man concerned for the universal survival of that catholic apostolic church, of which he was himself a noteworthy member.⁴

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1. Haller, *Piero da Monte*, p 74.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 54-5.
 3. Bishop Gilbert forwarded the archbishop's letter to him on 24 March 1445, and within a week Alnwick had issued the order for the clergy to be called together.
 4. Apparently the pope was not satisfied with the voluntary nature of the subsidy and in July 1446 sent a nuncio to enforce collection. In the following December the crown formally refused the papal demand. What happened to any funds Bishop Alnwick collected must be a subject for speculation (Jacob, 'Archbishop John Stafford', pp 52-6; Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p 376).

TABLE IX

WILLIAM ALNWICK'S ATTENDANCE ON THE ROYAL COUNCIL AS KEEPER OF THE PRIVY SEAL
DECEMBER 1422 - FEBRUARY 1432 (1-10 HENRY VI)

Evidence for
Attendance:

	1422-3	1423-4	1424-5	1425-6	1426-7	1427-8	1428-9	1429-30	1430-1	1431-2 (a)	TOTAL
No names given or incomplete list	26	10	4	11	10	11	21	13	23	5	134
Signatures on bills only	0	3	2	29	30	6	7	11	2	2	92
Alnwick's signature	0	1	1	0	1 (b)	0	0	0	0	0	3
Attendance list only	90	58	12	5	11	6	3	6	6	4	201
Alnwick listed	57	57	11	3	7 (c)	5	3	6	3 (d)	1 (e)	153
Signatures and attendance list	1	7	3	7	21	27	1	60	4	0	131
Alnwick's signature	1	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Alnwick listed	1	7	3	6	19	25	1	52	3	0	117
Total number of days with meetings	117	78	21	52	72	50	32	90	35	11	558
Total attended No. by Alnwick %	58 50	65 83	15 71	9 17	27 38	30 60	4 13	58 64	6 17	1 9	273 49
Total with evidence for attendance	91	68	17	41	62	39	11	77	12	6	424
Total attended No. by Alnwick %	58 64	65 96	15 88	9 22	27 44	30 77	4 36	58 75	6 50	1 17	273 64
Total with attendance lists	91	65	15	12	32	33	4	66	10	4	332
Total attended No. by Alnwick %	58 64	64 98	14 93	9 75	26 81	30 91	4 100	58 88	6 60	1 25	270 81

NB: The totals in this table are for days on which the council met, not separate meetings on one day

Footnotes:

(a) Figures for the year are only for the period up to the end of February 1432 when Alnwick ceased to be KPS

(b) His notarial mark appears recording that PS letters have been made

(c) One is, in fact, a note of him acting

(d) One must be an error. Alnwick, Bedford and Beaufort are recorded as present at a council meeting on 15 July 1431 (PRO: C 81/1545/22) when all were in France. The document has been misdated.

(e) 25 February, the day he was replaced by Lyndwood

Table X

WILLIAM ALNWICK'S ATTENDANCE ON THE ROYAL COUNCIL 1432-1449 (10 - 28 HENRY VI)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total
1432	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	2
1433	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
1434	(a) 0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	(b) 1	0	2
1435	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	2
1436	0	0	0	0	1	0	4	0	0	7	8	0	20
1437	0	0	0	0	2	2	6	0	0	2	6	0	18
1438	0	0	(c) 0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
1439	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	4
1440	(d) 0	(d) 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1441	0	2	0	(a) 0	0	(e) 0	0	0	0	0	1	0	3
1442	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	0	7
1443	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	2
1444	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1445	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	(a) 0	2	1	3
1446	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
1447	(a) 0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1448	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1449	0	0	0	0	1	(f) 0	(f) 0	0	1	0	0	1	3
TOTAL	0	4	0	2	11	2	11	0	2	18	19	3	72

Footnotes:

(a) Alnwick was sent a summons to attend the council this month.

(b) Council meeting in Cirencester.

(c) Alnwick recorded as in Windsor this month.

(d) Alnwick recorded as in Reading this month.

(e) Alnwick recorded as in Sheen this month

(f) Alnwick recorded as in Winchester at the time of Parliament.

NB: These figures recall no more than the number of surviving records that document William Alnwick's presence at a council meeting. The incompleteness of council records make it very dangerous to deduce that he was not there when not recorded. Particular notice should be taken of the frequency with which he was in London (see Appendix VII).

TABLE XI**BISHOP ALNWICK'S COMMISSIONS AS JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
DURING HIS EPISCOPATE AT NORWICH (1426-1437)**

	1426	1427	1428	1429	1430	1431	1432	1433	1434	1435	1436	1437
Norfolk			1	1	1	1	1		1		1	(b) 1
Bishop's Lynn				2		1	1	1	1			*
Suffolk						1	1	1	(a) 1		1	
Total	0	0	1	3	1	3	3	2	3	0	2	1

Footnotes:

(a) March but not July 1434.

(b) January but not March 1437

* = a commission took place which Bishop Alnwick was not appointed to.

He was never appointed to the commissions for Ipswich or Great Yarmouth.

**BISHOP ALNWICK'S COMMISSIONS AS JUSTICE OF THE PEACE
DURING HIS EPISCOPATE AT LINCOLN (1436-1449)**

	1436	1437	1438	1439	1440	1441	1442	1443	1444	1445	1446	1447	1448	1449
Bedfordshire		3		*	*			*					*	
Buckinghamshire	*	1	1	*	*	*			*		*	*		*
Leicestershire	*			1			1		(b) 1	*			*	
Lincolnshire: Holland					2	1			2				1	
Lincolnshire: Kesteven		1		4	2	1	1				2		1	
Lincolnshire: Lindsey	*	(c) 1					1	1	1			2	2	
Oxfordshire	1	1	1				*	*			*	*		
Rutland	*	1		*							*			
Total	1	8	2	5	4	2	3	1	4	0	2	2	4	0

Footnotes:

(b) May but not July 1444.

(c) March but not February 1437.

* = a commission took place which Bishop Alnwick was not appointed to.

He was never appointed to the commissions in Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Northamptonshire or Oxford town.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

The historian embarking on a study of a single career is faced with a number of dangers. It is all too easy to see one's subject in isolation from his age or to over-emphasise his importance to it.¹ However, in looking at the individual members of a body such as the late medieval English episcopate, one is able to add to the pool of knowledge, and perhaps to help re-assess the general view about that group. Until comparatively recently, fifteenth-century bishops have had a bad press.² Much, perhaps too much, has been made of Gascoigne's condemnation of the episcopate of his age, and even more temperate observers damn with faint praise. 'With comparatively few exceptions, the most respectable bishops appeared not as guides to holiness, but as shrewd men of affairs administering an extortionate and rigid technical business and legal system';³ and 'the English bishops of the fifteenth century seldom arouse the historian's enthusiasm. They seem, like their registers, too concerned with ecclesiastical routine, too governmental and orthodox for any that might still expect to find elements of heroism in the later medieval church'.⁴ One reason for this view, as Jacob hints, is surely the nature of the sources. One should not expect to find evidence of spiritual heroism in legal documents.

If few fifteenth-century bishops strike one as figures of absolute saintliness, were there many of that sort in the sixteenth century? If Archbishop Cranmer was a martyr for the Reformation, Bishop Fisher demonstrated that the orthodox late medieval church could produce men of equally high conscience. Who is to say, if times had been different, that Bishops Hallum, Spofford, Fleming or even Alnwick would not have been equally willing to defend what they saw as the truth to the death? Was the episcopal bench of the

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1. Some doubts about the validity of historical biography are discussed by G.L. Harriss, *Cardinal Beaufort*, p v.
 2. See above, pp 1-4.
 3. C.W. Previté-Orton, 'Epilogue', *Cambridge Medieval History*, vol. VIII, p 809.
 4. Jacob, 'Archbishop John Stafford', p 35. See also *Eng. Clergy*, pp 1-39.

nineteenth, or even the twentieth, century filled with many more moral, holy, or inspired men? Twentieth-century studies of members of the fifteenth-century episcopate, both as individuals¹ and as a group,² have shown that they were men of ability and purpose devoting their not inconsiderable skills to what they considered to be the spiritual and material well being of both their dioceses and their country.

Where does William Alnwick stand in relation to his contemporaries and what is his significance for the history of the period? Frequently, he has been considered as an exception, the one conscientious bishop among a body of sloth.³ It may be true that 'he was singularly distinguished among his fellow bishops of England for bearing the highest character and an unblemished name'.⁴ However, he was not alone in carrying out episcopal visitations in his dioceses,⁵ nor in prosecuting heretics and other offenders against church law.⁶ Where he is unique is in the richness of the records his administrations have left behind of such activities. If either his Lincoln visitation book or the record of the Norwich heresy trials had been lost, he would have appeared little different from the mass of his fellow bishops. It is surely here that his significance lies, that in the wealth of records he has bequeathed he presents an opportunity for a full study of an example of a not untypical bishop. His episcopal career touched some of the great issues of the day: the perceived danger of heresy to the church; the contrasting tolerance shown by ecclesiastical authority to other forms of lay piety;⁷ the conflict between the great monastic houses and the episcopate; the

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1. Particularly Jacob, *Archbishop Henry Chichele*, 'Bishop Thomas Brouns', 'Archbishop John Stafford'; Storey, *Thomas Langley*, and even Nigota 'John Kempe'.
 2. See especially R.G. Davies, Ph.D., and 'The Episcopate'.
 3. See above, pp 4-5.
 4. *Ingulph's Chronicle*, trans. Riley, pp 405-6.
 5. *Register of Thomas Spofford*, ed. Bannister, pp 39, 47, 76, 65, 216, 80; *Register of Thomas Bekynton*, ed. Maxwell-Lyte, *passim*.
 6. Cf. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, *passim*.
 7. Amply illustrated by the career of Margery Kempe, whose peculiarities were not mistaken for heresy by the bishops she met, whatever her peers thought of her (see *The Book of Margery Kempe*, *passim*).

conditions of religious houses on the eve of the dissolution; and the influence of the papal curia on English ecclesiastical patronage.

This is also true of his political career. It would be wrong to suggest he was personally a man of enormous political influence. He was not a Cardinal Beaufort nor even an Archbishop Kemp or Stafford. He was, however, one of a solid group of ecclesiastics, including other men such as Langley, Lyndwood, Gray and Brouns, without whom royal government, especially during Henry VI's minority, simply would not have been able to function. He is a useful illustration of the fact that it was possible to both serve the king and be a conscientious diocesan. Nevertheless, his petition for retirement demonstrates that he was not unaware of the tensions such dual service might produce and also that, when it came to the crunch, his first loyalty was to his church.¹

Finally, is it possible to gain some impression of the character of the man? That he was able is clear from his emergence from unknown beginnings to the highest circles of administration in church and state. That his legal training stood him in good stead is illustrated both by his employment on various royal commissions and also in the massive task he undertook not only in resolving the differences between the dean and chapter of Lincoln cathedral but also in his complete, if finally unsuccessful, recodification of its statutes.² This episode also illustrates the combative element in his nature. His battles with Macworth and the abbots of Bury St Edmunds and St Albans indicate that he was not a man to give way when he considered he was in the right. This was not, of course, unusual³ and, apart from his direct opponents, there is no evidence

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1. Even William Aiscough, 'the quintessential curialist' (Johnson, *Richard of York*, p 34) retired on very similar terms (see above, p 319).
 2. In fact, despite the fact that it was never ratified by the dean and chapter, as the *Novum Registrum* became accepted as part of the cathedral's statutes in later centuries one might even deny the argument that it was 'finally unsuccessful'.
 3. Cf. C.H. Lawrence's statement about the disputes between bishops of Lincoln and Oxford University in earlier centuries: 'Urbanity was not a virtue in a medieval (ctd on next page)

that his contemporaries thought he was wrong. He was clearly not a man who would accept insults to his dignity without response, as the prior of Binham and rector of Aston Clinton learnt to their cost.

William Alnwick may not have attracted the Italian scholar Piero da Monte, but his involvement with educational foundations, the concern he exhibited for the education of the clergy of his dioceses,¹ and the books he is known to have owned or read² indicate that he was not an academic nonentity. He was clearly a man trusted by the leading magnates and prelates of his age, who chose him, irrespective it would seem of political divisions, to assist in their property transactions, arbitrate in their disputes and supervise the administration of their wills. He was also capable of inspiring affection in those closest to him, as John Breton's touching will indicates. He seems to have administered justice fairly and, at times, with mercy. This is perhaps particularly clear in the case of his heresy trials, where the perceived ringleaders were executed while their followers were given the kinds of penance which would, conceivably, assist in their re-education. Nevertheless, as a father in God he appears more as an authoritarian figure than as a justified focus of his flock's affection, and he certainly does not strike one as having possessed any sense of humour. The sad events recorded by Giles' Chronicle ring true. The chronicler's judgement that he was a man '*multus discretus et virtuosus sed...nimis strictus*'³ is probably a fair one. Privately, William Alnwick would seem to have been a man with a real, if conventional, devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, and there is no reason to doubt the depth of feeling behind the choice of his motto '*Delectare in domino*'.

(ctd) bishop when he was defending the rights of his see. But, in fact, most of the confrontations were tussles of principle between old friends and former colleagues' (*History of University of Oxford*, vol. I, ed. J.I. Catto, p 99).

1. See above, pp 135, 150-2, 180-1, 272-3 and, especially, *Visitation*, II, pp xxi-xxx, for some discussion of his will and other benefactions.
2. See Appendix VIII.
3. *Incerti Scriptoris Chronicon*, ed. Giles, p 39.

APPENDIX I
THE PRE-EPISCOPAL CAREER OF WILLIAM ALNWICK,
BISHOP OF NORWICH AND LINCOLN *

William Alnwick was bishop of Norwich from 1426 to 1436 and bishop of Lincoln from 1436 until his death in 1449. His Norwich episcopate is probably best known for the heresy trials he conducted between 1428 and 1431¹ and for the disputes he had with the abbots of Bury St Edmunds (William Curteys)² and St Albans (John Whethamstede).³ His Lincoln episcopate is remembered for his tireless visitations of religious houses⁴ and for the long running dispute he had with John Macworth, the difficult dean of Lincoln cathedral.⁵ Visual reminders of his episcopates include parts of the west front of Norwich cathedral and the ruins of his episcopal palace at Lincoln.⁶ Sadly, his tomb, by the west door of Lincoln cathedral, was destroyed during the Civil War and the wooden spires he had built on Lincoln cathedral's towers were brought down at the beginning of the nineteenth century.⁷

A number of general studies of the pre-episcopal careers of the English and Welsh bishops of the fifteenth century have appeared in the last twenty years, making it possible to judge, to some extent

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- * Published in *People, Politics and Community in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. J. Rosenthal and C. Richmond, pp 90-107.
1. The records of these were edited by N.P. Tanner as *Heresy Trials in the Diocese of Norwich, 1428-31*, Camden Society, 4th Series, vol. XX (1977). The trials were, incorrectly, attributed to Alnwick's predecessor, John Wakering, by F. Blomefield, *An Essay Towards a Topographical History of the County of Norfolk*, vol. III (2nd edn, 1806), pp 140-1, 530.
 2. Discussed by J.W. Elston, 'William Curteys, Abbot of Bury St Edmunds 1429-46', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley (1979), pp 340-59.
 3. *Amundesham*, vol. I, pp 300-69.
 4. A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), *Visitations of Religious Houses in the Diocese of Lincoln 1436 to 1449*, Canterbury and York Society, vols XXIV, XXXIII (1919, 1927).
 5. A. Hamilton Thompson, *The English Clergy and Their Organization in the Later Middle Ages* (Oxford, 1947), pp 90-7; H. Bradshaw and C. Wordsworth (eds), *Statutes of Lincoln Cathedral*, 2 parts in 3 volumes, Cambridge, Part I (1892), pp 401-8, Part II (1897), *passim*.
 6. Blomefield, vol. III, pp 531-2; *Visitations* II, p xxiii.
 7. T. Allen, *The History of the County of Lincoln, From the Earliest Period to the Present Time* (1834), p 160.

at least, how typical Alnwick was of the period. Lita-Rose Betcherman began the series with an article which laid great stress on the need to have been in royal service, and rather too much emphasis on the involvement of factions in the making of bishops.¹ This was followed by Joel T. Rosenthal's statistical examination, which correlated the bishops' social backgrounds and education with their subsequent careers and promotions.² The most important contribution has come from Richard G. Davies, who has studied both the pre- and post-episcopal careers of all the English and Welsh bishops of the period 1375-1443.³ Of particular interest was his unravelling of the actual process of promotion. He illustrated the fact that, although the government's choice of bishop usually succeeded, the pope, whose position was never simply that of a rubber stamp, was sometimes able to impose his own will. One theme, for the period 1375-1443, brought out by Davies is the replacement, on the episcopal bench, of the old career civil servant (the last example seems to have been Thomas Langley) by the law graduate who had spent at least part of his career in ecclesiastical administration, particularly in the Canterbury province. He considers Alnwick something of a throwback to the old career civil servant,⁴ but, in fact, there is some indication that Alnwick has claims to be one of those who started their career working for the archbishop of Canterbury.⁵ Finally, J.M. George Jr.⁶ has shown how, during the personal rule of Henry VI, these law graduates gave way, to some extent, to men trained in theology, many of whom had served the king in a personal capacity as confessor.

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1. 'The Makings of Bishops in the Lancastrian Period', *Speculum*, vol. XLI (1966), pp 397-419.
 2. 'The Training of an Elite Group: English Bishops in the Fifteenth Century', *Transactions of the American Philosphical Society*, New Series, vol. LX, part V (Philadelphia, 1970).
 3. 'The Episcopate in England and Wales, 1375-1443', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Manchester (1974); 'The Episcopate' in *Profession, Vocation and Culture in Later Medieval England. Essays Dedicated to the Memory of A.R. Myers*, ed. C.H. Clough (Liverpool, 1982), pp 51-89.
 4. 'The Episcopate', p 64.
 5. See below, pp 362-3, 371.
 6. 'The Episcopate and the Crown, 1437-50', unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University (1976).

William Alnwick's date of birth is unknown. It has been stated that he was thirty-eight (relatively young for a man of unknown origins) at the time of his promotion in 1426, thus suggesting 1388.¹ A birth date of around 1390 would seem to fit in with the fact that he became a bachelor of civil law, a degree that took ten years to achieve, in 1415. It is known that he came from Alnwick in Northumberland but neither the names nor social origins of his parents are known. Piero da Monte, papal collector in the 1430's, described him thus: '*rusticanus homo....ex vili genere natus*'.² Some doubt may be thrown on this statement by the fact that da Monte was a hostile witness, as he was an associate of John Whethamstede, abbot of St Albans, who carried out a lengthy dispute with Alnwick in the 1430's. Also, the letter in which he thus describes Alnwick is addressed to Pietro Barbo, for whom he was attempting, with difficulty, to secure collation of a Lincoln prebend from the bishop. Nevertheless, the very fact that nothing is known of Alnwick's family points to there being some truth in the allegation. It was not unusual for bishops of the period to be of lowly or unknown birth (other examples being Brouns, Lyndwood and Bubwith) but Alnwick did better than most in the wealth of the dioceses he attained. In contrast to the general agreement on the lowliness of Alnwick's birth, A.F. Leach³ claims that Alnwick was a Percy, brother of the earl of Northumberland. However, this statement seems to have arisen from a misreading of the foundation records of a chantry founded at Alnwick in 1448 by Bishop Alnwick and members of the Percy family.

Alnwick has been identified with several people:⁴ a Premonstratensian canon of Alnwick who was involved in the 1407 rebellion; a Benedictine monk of St Albans, 1428 to c. 1434, and prior of Belvoir, 1435; and the recluse of Westminster who

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1. *Ibid.*, p 44. George cites no authority for this statement.
 2. J. Haller, *Piero Da Monte: Ein Gelehrter Und Päpstlicher Beamter Des 15 Jahrhunderts* (Rome, 1941), p 74.
 3. *The Schools of Medieval England* (1915), p 269.
 4. These misidentifications are discussed by A. Hamilton Thompson in *Visitations II*, pp xv-xviii, and by D. Knowles in *The Religious Orders in England*, 3 vols (Cambridge, 1948-59), vol. II, pp 367-8.

became first confessor-general of the Bridgettines of Twickenham, c. 1416 to c. 1418. However, it is quite wrong to identify any of these men with the secular clerk who was to become the bishop and, indeed, simultaneous appearances make it impossible.

Possible relatives include, apart from the men of the same name with whom he has been misidentified, a John Alnwick to whom he acted as patron after he became bishop.¹ His only identifiable relative was a niece, Agnes,² who married a Richard Hayton, had a daughter and predeceased Alnwick. Perhaps her husband was the Richard Hayton, coroner of York, who died in 1421.³ Another possible connection is William Hayton, a clerk of the signet while Alnwick was king's secretary and later secretary himself (it may be more than coincidence that he left office as secretary at about the same time as Alnwick resigned the privy seal).⁴

Nothing is known of Alnwick's very early life and education. He made bequests in his will to the parish church of Alnwick, the abbot and convent of Premonstratensian canons of Alnwick and the Carmelite friars of Hulne (three miles away). Perhaps one of these provided his earliest education. He was one of several clerics who seem to have owed early advances to more senior churchmen (other examples are John Kemp, Spofford and Brouns who were patronised, respectively, by Chichele, Beaufort and Repingdon). It is evident that he considered he owed much to Stephen Scrope, archdeacon of Richmond and nephew of the executed archbishop of York. In his will, he established a five year chantry 'for my soul and the soul of Master Stephen le Scrope, sometime archdeacon of Richmond, and the souls of the faithful departed'. When Scrope died, in 1418, Alnwick was an executor of his will and was bequeathed '*i flatt pecia de auro cooperto*', one silver-covered salt-cellar bearing

1. *BRVO*, vol. I, p 27.

2. She is mentioned in his will, LPL: Register John Stafford (Canterbury), ff 178v-179v; translated in Hamilton Thompson, *Visitations II*, pp xxiv-xxx.

3. *CCR*, 1419-22, p 177.

4. J. Otway-Ruthven, *The King's Secretary and the Signet Office in the Fifteenth Century* (Cambridge, 1939), pp 13-14 and *passim*.

Scrope's arms, two books outright and four books for his lifetime which were to go to York Minster library after his death.¹

The first certain notice we have of Alnwick reflects Scrope's patronage. On 7 July 1411, William Alnewyk, unmarried clerk of the diocese of Durham, was appointed papal notary under faculty of the archdeacon of Richmond.² Three weeks later, on 28 July, we find him exercising this office in drawing up the instrument of resignation of a church in the Durham diocese.³ This establishes an early connection with Thomas Langley, bishop of Durham, with whom Alnwick was to serve for many years on the minority council of Henry VI. Langley may well have played a part in advancing the career of his fellow northerner. Later, in 1428, the two were to join with a John Hore of Childerley, Cambridgeshire, in founding a hostel at Cambridge for Benedictine students from Crowland. This was later called Buckingham College and developed into Magdalene College.⁴ When Langley died, in 1437, Alnwick was an executor, and beneficiary of his will.⁵ By 1411, Alnwick had probably commenced his studies at Cambridge, and it seems likely that it was Scrope, who was chancellor of the university in 1414, who enabled him to pursue his education there. The first benefice Alnwick is known to have received was Goldsborough, which was situated in Scrope's archdeaconry. There is no record of his institution there but, on 3 April 1415, he was granted leave of absence from the church, for five years, to pursue his studies at an English university.⁶

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1. *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. I, Surtees Society (1936), pp 385-89.
 2. *CPL*, vol. VI, p 333.
 3. *The Register of Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham, 1406-37*, ed. R.L. Storey, vol. I, Surtees Society, vol. CLXIV (1949), pp 160-61.
 4. *CPR*, 1422-9, p 475; C.H. Cooper, *Annals of Cambridge*, vol. I (Cambridge, 1842), pp 178-79.
 5. *Historiae Dunelmensis Scriptores Tres*, Surtees Society, vol. IX (1839), pp cxxli-cclvii.
 6. Borthwick Institute: Register 18: Register Henry Bowet, vol. I, f 267. His estate as rector of Goldsborough was ratified on 25 March 1419 (*CPR*, 1416-22, p 214) and he had resigned the benefice by 30 July 1421 (A. Hamilton Thompson (ed.), 'The Registers of the Archdeaconry of Richmond, 1361-1442, From the Abstract Made by Matthew Hutton (BL: Ms. Harl. 6978)', *The Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, vol. XXV (1920), p 205).

Alnwick was not even ordained as an acolyte until 21 December 1415¹ so his institution at Goldsborough was uncanonical to say the least. This indicated a less refined ecclesiastical conscience than he was later to display and, more importantly perhaps, that he was a clerical high flier.

While it would be wrong to state that any cleric (except perhaps for those from the noblest families) had his eye on the episcopate from the start of his career, the majority of those who achieved this position started with a training in law, and Alnwick was no exception. He was a bachelor of civil law by 1415, a licenciate by 1417 and a doctor by 1419.² At the same time, he advanced through holy orders, being ordained subdeacon on 14 March 1416,³ and deacon on 21 May 1418.⁴

Alnwick's Cambridge career does not seem to have been entirely peaceful. On 20 June 1415, the chancellor of the university, and the mayor and sheriff, were ordered to arrest him, together with William Buckworth, Robert Berkford, John Nowell and Roger Strangwys, and bring them before the king in chancery with all speed.⁵ No reason is given for this commission of arrest and Emden is unable to give any information about Alnwick's fellow students. However, in May, a writ had been issued requiring the university's chancellor to provide the royal chancery with the names of scholars in canon and civil law failing to attend the law schools and pay the proper fees.⁶ Perhaps Alnwick and his companions had been among the names submitted. Whatever the reason for his arrest, Alnwick cannot have been under a cloud for long for, in about 1418,

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1. Cambridge University Library: Ely Diocesan Records: G 1/3: Register John Fordham (Ely), f 265.
 2. *BRUC*, p 11.
 3. Guildhall Library: Ms. 9531/4: Register Richard Clifford (London), f 76.
 4. Register Fordham (Ely), f 269v.
 5. *CPR*, 1413-16, p 347. There are a number of similar commissions in the patent rolls at the time.
 6. C.H. Cooper, *Annals*, vol. I, p 157.

Cambridge town chose him as one of two arbitrators to settle a vehement dispute between it and the university.¹

Before this date, William Alnwick had come, by some means, to the attention of Henry Chichele, archbishop of Canterbury. On 21 November 1416, the archbishop commissioned Alnwick with John Judde, doctor of canon law, to hear and determine a dispute over a will in the Ely diocese.² A few months later, on 23 February 1417,³ Chichele again commissioned Alnwick, this time with William Bukkeworth (surely the same as the Buckworth arrested with him), bachelor of canon law, and John Cok, rector of the parish church of Lavenham, to prove the will of Richard, earl of Oxford, which they did sitting in the Cambridge parish church of St John, sealing the instrument with '*sigillum officialitatis Eliensis, quod ego Willelmus Alnewyk predictus ad manus habeo*'.⁴ There is no more direct evidence of Chichele using Alnwick in diocesan or provincial administration before he entered royal service, but, on 20 December 1419, Alnwick was instituted, by the archbishop's collation, to the rectory of Hollingbourne, Kent.⁵ This rectory, which had a perpetual vicar, was, according to E.F. Jacob, one of the parishes, exempt from the archdeacon, which the archbishop used to maintain and reward his legal friends and assistants.⁶ This collation is perhaps evidence that Alnwick was more closely connected with the archbishop and his administration than has hitherto been supposed and that he belongs to the group of bishops (notably John Kemp, Stafford, Lyndwood and Beckington) who benefited from early patronage by the archiepiscopal see. There is no record of Alnwick's ordination to the priesthood, but perhaps Chichele saw

1. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p 162.

2. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. IV, p 41. Judde was the bishop of Ely's official (*Register Fordham (Ely)*, ff 149, 165, 201).

*. The published version of this paper misprints the date as 1416.

3. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, pp 116-8. Was it by chance that this seal was at hand or was Alnwick involved in the administration of the diocese of Ely?

4. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p 176.

5. *Ibid.*, vol. I, p lxxvii. Alnwick had resigned the rectory by 24 May 1421 (*ibid.*, vol. I, p 199).

that he had been properly ordained before the collation.¹ A further sign of the archbishop's patronage may be the institution, in 1418, of a William Alnwick to the rectory of Goodnestone next to Faversham, at the presentation of Thomas Chicche esquire.² However, as this William Alnwick is only described as chaplain, not licenciate of civil law, and the next rector was instituted in succession to John Alnwick,³ it would perhaps be dangerous to identify the rector of Goodnestone with the future bishop.

However important service to the archbishop of Canterbury was for the early promotion of rising clerks, most fifteenth-century bishops owed their eventual promotion to work for the crown. Like many others, Alnwick's pre-episcopal career is most noted for his royal service. It is not known how he came to the attention of Henry V, perhaps through the Cambridge disputes, perhaps through Chichele. There may even have been some connection through Richard Caudray, his near-contemporary at Cambridge, who was scribe of the archbishop's court of audience in 1414-15, engaged in the French negotiations in 1419 and king's secretary in 1420.⁴ However he came to the king's notice, Alnwick was in France and one of those appointed, on 7 July 1420, to treat with the ambassadors of the duke of Brittany for correction of the abuses of the truce.⁵ This was the first of several diplomatic commissions for Alnwick. It may be that it was his training in civil law, a common qualification for diplomatic service, which attracted him to the king's attention. On 5 December 1420, he was appointed to array several retinues.⁶ Two days later, he received collation of the

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1. Bishop Fordham's Ely register (*ut supra*) contains no record of ordinations between September 1419 (f 272v) and December 1420 (f 107v), and it is possible that Alnwick was ordained priest in the Ely diocese in this period.
 2. 5 February 1418 (*Reg. Chic.*, vol. I, p 166).
 3. 16 December 1420 (*ibid.*, vol. I, p 196).
 4. *BRUC*, p 127.
 5. *Forty-Second Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records* (1881), p 375. Among other clerical diplomats were Bishops John Kemp, Morgan, Stafford, Lyndwood, Brouns, Beckington and Moleyns.
 6. *Ibid.*, p 393.

archdeaconry of Salisbury from Bishop Chaundler of Salisbury.¹ This archdeaconry was the first major benefice to fall to him and, as no connection with Chaundler has been established, Alnwick probably owed it to his royal service (or possibly to Chichele who had great connections with Salisbury). There is little evidence that Alnwick treated his archdeaconry as much more than a sinecure and, indeed, his absence in France over the next two years would have precluded any official activity even if he had felt so inclined.² On 5 January 1421, Alnwick's diplomatic experience was extended by his appointment, with John Saint John, mayor of Bordeaux, to negotiate with the ambassadors of Charles lord de la Bret and Francis lord of S. Basile. These negotiations resulted in the latter two renouncing the appeal made to the French court by Amanen lord de la Bret and doing homage to Henry V.³ Henry V was in England between 1 February and 11 June 1421 and William Alnwick accompanied him.⁴ He may have been the king's secretary as early as 15 April when he assisted, in Henry's presence, at Lincoln, in the arbitration by Fleming, bishop of Lincoln, between the dean and chapter of the cathedral.⁵ He was certainly secretary by 1 May when he was commissioned with Philip Morgan, bishop of Worcester, and John Stafford, the keeper of the privy seal, to treat with Genoese ambassadors.⁶ Because of the personal nature of the appointment, achieved merely by the handing over of the signet, it is very difficult to date kings' secretaries accurately. The latest mention for Richard Caudray, his predecessor, is dated 2

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1. Wiltshire County Record Office: D 1/2/8: Register John Chaundler (Salisbury), part 1, f 40v. Richard Gourley was instituted as his proxy. Alnwick received papal dispensation to hold an incompatible benefice with the archdeaconry, on 4 May 1421 (CPL, vol. VII, p 205). The archdeaconry was valued at not more than 100 marks. He succeeded John Stafford to this dignity as, indeed, he was to succeed him to both the keepership of the privy seal and the deanery of St Martin le Grand. See below, pp 367, 373.
 2. Almost all the mandates for induction addressed to the archdeacon of Salisbury are also addressed to his official. (Register Chaundler (Salisbury), *passim*).
 3. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part III, pp 197-99.
 4. A.L. Brown, 'The Privy Seal in the Early Fifteenth Century', unpublished Oxford University D.Phil. (1955), p 106.
 5. CPR, 1416-22, pp 404-6.
 6. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, pp 28-30.

June 1420,¹ and Alnwick may have been appointed at any time after that. Whenever it came, the appointment was a sure sign of royal favour.² The signet, which was very much the king's personal instrument, was still viewed with suspicion as an instrument of warranty, only fully acceptable in the privy seal office. However, Henry's absence in France, especially after June 1421 when he left the privy seal behind, increased the importance of the signet. It then became, in the absence of the privy seal, the natural instrument for communicating with the administration in England. It was used for issuing warrants not only to the privy seal office but also to the chancery for letters of minor importance. On at least one occasion, even the exchequer was ordered to accept warrants sealed under it.³ The secretary was also responsible for the issue of the king's private letters and some minor diplomatic correspondence.

There is no evidence that Alnwick, as secretary, received a fixed salary or livery from the great wardrobe, although he did receive five measures of scarlet cloth for Queen Katherine's coronation.⁴ Otherwise, he probably had to make do with the fees of the office⁵ and with the benefices that came to him as a royal clerk. While he was acting as secretary, Alnwick received collation of the York prebend of Knaresborough-cum-Bickhill,⁶ which Stephen Scrope had held at the time of his death⁷ and which Alnwick continued to hold until his promotion to the episcopate.⁸ He also

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1. J.L. Kirby (ed.), *Calendar of Signet Letters of Henry IV and Henry V (1399-1422)* (1978), p. xii.
 2. Bubwith and Beckington were among the royal secretaries who went on to become bishops. For what follows on the office of king's secretary, see Otway-Ruthven, *The King's Secretary*, *passim*; A.L. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', *passim*.
 3. On 27 November 1421, Henry sent a letter under the privy seal to the treasurer and barons of the exchequer ordering them to allow signet letters and chamberlain's bills in the account of the keeper of the great wardrobe (PRO: King's Remembrancer Memoranda Rolls (E 159): E 159/200: Hilary rot 29).
 4. PRO: Great Wardrobe Accounts: E 101/407/4, 9 Henry V, f 36v.
 5. The fee was 6s 8d per signet letter (Otway-Ruthven, *The King's Secretary*, p. 84).
 6. 3 May 1421 (Register Henry Bowet (York), vol. I, f 72).
 7. *Ibid.*, f 61v.
 8. CPL, vol. VII, p. 17.

received from the king the prebend of Gauray in the cathedral of Bayeux.¹

While in England with the king, Alnwick attended the council meeting at Lambeth, on 6 May 1421, in which a statement was made to Henry of the revenues and expenditure of the kingdom. This marks his first appearance in the records of the king's council.² He also seems to have taken part in the assembly which met at Westminster, on the next day, to discuss the reform of the Benedictine order.³ On 22 May 1421, he was appointed, with Bishop Edmund Lacy of Exeter, Sir John Colville and Master John Stokes, doctor of laws, to redress infractions of the truce with Brittany.⁴ Alnwick returned to France with the king and was perhaps responsible for drawing up Henry's will, at Dover, before they embarked.⁵ An entry in the patent rolls for 1424 describes William Alnwick as having been both secretary and confessor to Henry V.⁶ It may have been to assist him in carrying out the latter responsibilities that he received a papal indult for a portable altar, on 15 March 1422.⁷ On that same date, John Stopyndon was addressed as king's secretary in a papal letter.⁸ This is the only evidence that Alnwick was replaced and is possibly a mistake of the papal chancery. Stopyndon may have been a clerk of the signet. It is likely that Alnwick continued as secretary until the king's death. He was in attendance when Henry died, on 31 August 1422,⁹ and returned to England by 5 November in time for the burial and formal reading of the will on the 7th.¹⁰

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1. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 49. Not Bayonne as Otway-Ruthven states (*The King's Secretary*, p 170).
 2. *PPC*, vol. II, p 315.
 3. PRO: E 135/1/2; this meeting may have influenced him when he later came to inspect the religious houses in his dioceses.
 4. *Forty-fourth Report of the Deputy Keeper of the Public Records (1883)*, p 626; or 21 May (*Foedera*, vol IV, part IV, p 27).
 5. 10 June 1421 (B.P. Wolffe, *Henry VI* (1981), p 29). The will was supplemented by codicils, also probably drawn up by Alnwick, late in August 1422.
 6. *CPR*, 1422-9, p 226. (Cf. PRO: Chancery: Patent Rolls (C 66): C 66/415 m 10).
 7. *CPL*, vol. VII, p 323.
 8. *Ibid.*, vol. VII, p 222.
 9. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 247-8.
 10. R.A. Griffiths, *Henry VI* (1981), pp 19, 21.

The first parliament of the new reign lasted from 9 November to 18 December 1422.¹ Alnwick attended its sessions and handed over draft letters patent, approved by the king before his death, on behalf of the priory of Ivychurch in the Salisbury diocese.² Although he was not one of those appointed to the minority council on 9 December,³ a place was soon found for him in the royal administration. William Kinwolmersh, who had been reappointed treasurer, died before the parliament closed⁴ and, at the council meeting of 16 December, it was decided that John Stafford should replace him as treasurer and that Alnwick would replace Stafford as keeper of the privy seal.⁵ As a former king's secretary, a post which worked closely with the privy seal office, Alnwick was the natural choice, and was, in fact, only one of a number of men (including Nicholas Bubwith and Thomas Beckington) who progressed from one office to the other in the period. He was to retain his new office until 1432 when he was replaced by his secondary, William Lyndwood.⁶

The keeper of the privy seal was one of the three major administrative officers.⁷ While its position was obviously inferior to that of the chancellor or treasurer, the office was of particular importance during the minority of Henry VI. The privy seal was the principal instrument of the minority council, being used to communicate with the chancery, exchequer and numerous

1. *HBC*, p 530.

2. *RP*, vol. IV, p 179. This may be an indication of some feeling of duty to the Salisbury diocese.

3. *Ibid.*, vol. IV, p 171.

4. He was dead by 15 December when Alnwick received collation of the St Paul's prebend of Wildland in succession to him. (G. Hennessey, *Novum Repertorium Ecclesiasticum Parochiale Londinense* (1898), p 55).

5. *PPC*, vol. III, p 8. He was paid from 19 December (PRO: Exchequer Warrants for Issues: E 404/39/121).

6. *HBC*, p 192.

7. For the position of keeper of the privy seal in the early fifteenth century see A.L. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', *passim*. The close connection between the privy seal office and the minority council is indicated by the council records, notably the PRO series C 81 (Warrants for the Great Seal) and E 28 (Exchequer, Treasury of Receipt, Council and Privy Seal) and the records published in *PPC*.

lesser offices. It was also used for sealing correspondence not requiring the use of the great seal, diplomatic correspondence being of particular importance. The close connection between the council and the privy seal office is reflected in the fact that the clerk of the council was usually a privy seal clerk. In the early years of the minority this was Richard Caudray, Alnwick's Cambridge contemporary and predecessor as Henry V's secretary. The keeper's own executive authority was strictly limited to certain routine matters. However, as an *ex-officio* member of the council, he was in a position of some influence.

The regularity of Alnwick's attendance at council can, to a certain extent, be traced through its records.¹ There are records for 294 dates on which the council met in the first four years of Henry VI's reign (i.e. between September 1422 and August 1426). For eighty-seven of these dates (30%) there is no complete indication of attendance. There is a record of attendance for 210 dates.² On 127 of these days, when meetings were held at one location, Alnwick's presence was recorded. On eight days he attended meetings at more than one location and on six days he was present at one location and absent at another. Thus his presence was recorded on 141 out of 210 days, or 67% of the time. However, of the sixty-nine days on which his presence was not recorded, there was only one date, 2 June 1426, when his absence was actually noted.³ Thirty-five days (mainly in 4 Henry VI) are occasions when the only evidence of attendance is signatures on the front of a council document. These signatures cannot be taken as a complete record of attendance. In fact, on six occasions when his signature does not appear (3, 4 and 6 July and 18 November 1424, and 25 and 26 July 1426)⁴ other evidence confirms his presence.

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1. These figures are based on the recording of the attendance in the council records in *PPC*, vol. III, and in the *PRO* series C 81/1544 and E 28/38-47.
 2. On 3 dates, 20 and 21 December 1422 and 20 July 1426, there is a record of the attendance at one location but not at another.
 3. *PPC*, vol. III, p 198.
 4. *Ibid.*, vol. III, pp 148-54; *PRO*: E 28/45-8; *PRO*: C 81/1544. In all cases where there is a document endorsed with the names of those present he is included, but his name is not among the signatures.

Indeed, a council document of 3 July 1424 does not contain his signature on the front although on the dorse he is said to have been present.¹ On 4 July 1424, it had been decided that in passing their bills 'the names of thassenters be writen of their own hand'² and this is, presumably, what these signatures represent. However, there are remarkably few documents that Alnwick has signed. If his absence from the signatures does not denote his absence from council meetings, it seems unlikely that he dissented from almost all the decisions made during this period. Was the keeper of the privy seal's assent perhaps assumed - an assumption that would have been strengthened by the fact that the instruments used to further the council's decisions were usually sealed with the privy seal? Perhaps the keeper was regarded merely as an executive rather than advisory member of the council. Despite these difficulties, it is clear that Alnwick regularly attended council and may well have exercised a steady if not outstanding influence over its actions.³

Alnwick's service to the minority government was not confined to his work in the privy seal office and attendance on the council. The diplomatic work he had begun for Henry V was continued. On 3 December 1423, he was commissioned with Philip Morgan, bishop of Worcester, John Stafford, treasurer, Ralph, Lord Cromwell, Sir John Pelham, knight, Robert Waterton, esq, and John Stokes, DCL, to treat with Scottish ambassadors regarding the liberation of James, king of Scotland.⁴ On 14 February 1424, he was appointed one of the embassy, led by John Kemp, bishop of London, which met the Scottish king and ambassadors in Durham, concluding a truce on 28 March.⁵ On 14 July 1425, he was appointed, with the bishop of

1. PRO: E 28/45.

2. *PPC*, vol. III, p 150.

3. That his position was considered one of some influence is indicated by the petitions addressed to the KPS, and those considered at his request among the council records (E 28/38-47, *passim*).

4. J. Bain (ed.), *Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland Preserved in H.M. P.R.O. London*, vol. IV, Edinburgh (1888), pp 189-90; *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 99; PRO: C 81/1544/53.

5. *Foedera*, vol IV, part IV, pp 108-12. The other ambassadors were Thomas Langley, bishop of Durham, the earls of Northumberland and Westmorland, Lord Dacre, Baron Graystoke and Sir Robert Umfreville. While he was in the north, the (ctd on next page)

Durham, Lord Cromwell, John, Lord Scrope, Robert Umfreville and William Haryngton, to meet Scottish commissioners at Berwick, on 15 August, to redress infractions of this truce.¹ In addition, on three occasions, between December 1423 and June 1426, he served on commissions to hear appeals from the court of Admiralty, thus utilising his legal training.² He attended Parliament where he acted as proctor for Archbishop Bowet of York, in September 1423, and Bishop Spofford of Hereford, in April 1425.³ He was one of the lords of the council who made loans to the king, on 3 March 1425.⁴ His loan of 100 marks was the smallest made, compared with the greatest, 1000 marks from Chichele, and the second smallest, 200 marks from Stafford. This is perhaps a reflection of the fact that he was the only member of council who did not receive payment for attendance, receiving no more than his 20s a day salary as keeper of the privy seal.⁵

It has been stated that Alnwick was the young king's confessor by May 1424.⁶ Davies considers it odd that a civil lawyer in the service of the royal administration should have held this post, and, in fact, it is not certain that he did, at least at this early date. The evidence most commonly cited is the patent roll entry, for 16 May 1424, which in fact states that Alnwick had been Henry V's confessor.⁷ A George Arthurton seems to have been Henry VI's confessor at this date.⁸ The only source which describes Alnwick as the king's confessor before his promotion to Norwich is a

(ctd) privy seal was handed over to the care of his secondary, Robert Frye* (PRO: E 28/44, 28 February, 1424). *Frye was misprinted as 'Foxe' in the published version of this paper.

1. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 117.
2. 5 December 1423 (CPR, 1422-9, pp 160-61); 15 May 1426 (*ibid.*, p 280); 1 June 1426 (*ibid.*, p 343).
3. PRO: SC 10/47/2348; A.T. Bannister (ed.), *Registrum Thome Spofford, 1422-48*, Canterbury and York Society (1919), vol. XXIII, p 86.
4. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 167-68.
5. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 154-58. Out of this he was obliged to maintain a household for the clerks and servants of the office (A.L. Brown, 'The Privy Seal', p 327).
6. E.g. *BRUC*, p 11; Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 72; Davies Ph.D., pp 363, 465, Appendix 1, pp v-vi.
7. See p 366, n 6 above.
8. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, pp 53, 56.

chronology of the bishops of Ely.¹ This cannot have been composed before Bishop Morgan's death in 1435, by which time Alnwick did hold the post,² so it is possible that the chronicler was mistaken as to the date. There is not much evidence that Henry VI had any particular affection for Alnwick, such as he showed to some of his other confessors, although, later, the bishop was to co-operate enthusiastically with Henry's educational foundations.

Alnwick's duties as a royal official and member of the council cannot have left him with much time to devote to the ecclesiastical administration with which he had started his career. On the same day that he was appointed keeper of the privy seal he was granted, for life, the wardenship of the hospital of St James by Westminster.³ There is no evidence that he treated this office as anything more than a sinecure, a fate that seems to have been suffered by several of the London hospitals at this time. As bishop of Norwich he used the hospital quite often as his London base, and it may have been at his instance that its lands were granted to the newly founded college of Eton in 1449.⁴ The one instance we have of his using the hospital before his promotion was on 4 February 1426, when, acting on Chichele's behalf, he oversaw the probate of the will of John Fordham, bishop of Ely.⁵ Another notable will, that of Richard Whittington, was proved before him and William Lyndwood, acting as the archbishop's commissaries, on 21 April 1423.⁶ In November of the same year, he was again involved in the dispute between Dean Macworth and the chapter of Lincoln cathedral, when he was mandated by the pope to confirm part

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1. BL: Cottonian Ms. Titus A1, f 144v. One version is printed by Henry Wharton, in *Anglia Sacra* (1661), vol. I, p 667.
 2. *CPR*, 1429-36, p 506.
 3. 16 December 1422 (*CPR*, 1422-9, pp 14, 17).
 4. N. Blakiston, 'The Archives of Eton College', *Archives*, vol. V (1961-2), p 124.
 5. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, pp 328-29.
 6. *Ibid.*, vol. II, pp 243-44. [At this point in the original text, the statement was made that Chichele's register recorded Alnwick's presence during the archbishop's metropolitan visitation of the diocese of Salisbury (citing *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, pp 212-3). This statement, which was based on a misunderstanding of the text, was incorrect.]

of the agreement made between the dean and chapter.' This involvement was probably of assistance when, after his promotion to Lincoln, he came himself to tackle the dean.

From the time of his collation to the archdeaconry of Salisbury, in December 1420, Alnwick would have been required to attend the convocation of the southern province of the English church. However, it is perhaps significant of the fact that his main attention was given to royal rather than ecclesiastical service that the only mention of him in the records of convocation, before he became bishop of Norwich, is of his coming, with other members of the king's council, to the convocation of 12 October 1424 - 17 February 1425, to appeal, unsuccessfully, for a 'notable subsidy'.²

Indeed, although it seems that his service to the church was not as negligible as has hitherto been presumed, it would be wrong to suppose that his promotion to the episcopate resulted directly from anything other than his royal service.³ As keeper of the privy seal, he was an obvious candidate for promotion. Only one keeper during the period, John Prophete, failed to attain the episcopate and so, after Alnwick's appointment to the privy seal, it was not unlikely that he would be a candidate in the event of a suitable vacancy.⁴

1. CPL, vol. VII, pp 272-73.

2. Reg. Chich., vol. III, pp 88-89.

3. Piero Da Monte described him as '*verum regiis precibus exaltatus*' (Haller, *Piero da Monte*, p 74).

4. In the years 1399-1450, the keepers of the privy seal were: Richard Clifford (bishop of Worcester, London); Thomas Langley (bishop of Durham); Nicholas Bubwith (bishop of London, Salisbury, Bath and Wells); John Prophete; John Wakering (bishop of Norwich); Henry Ware (bishop of Chichester); John Kemp (bishop of Rochester, London, York, Canterbury); John Stafford (bishop of Bath and Wells, Canterbury); William Alnwick; William Lyndwood (bishop of St Davids); Thomas Beckington (bishop of Bath and Wells); and Adam Moleyns (bishop of Chichester).

The events leading up to Alnwick's promotion are complicated.¹ On 20 October 1423, Archbishop Bowet of York died. The council's choice to succeed him was Bishop Philip Morgan of Worcester,² and they chose John Stafford (the treasurer, and therefore one ahead of Alnwick in the queue for the episcopacy) to succeed Morgan. However, the pope, Martin V, provided Bishop Fleming of Lincoln to York. Fleming was 'persuaded' to stand down by the council.³ During the ensuing deadlock, on 24 October 1424, Bishop Bubwith of Bath and Wells died. The council wrote to the pope officially nominating Stafford for this see, at the same time suggesting Alnwick for the Worcester diocese.⁴ Stafford was duly provided to Bath and Wells.⁵ On promotion, he would have vacated his position as dean of St Martin's le Grand, a very valuable benefice in the king's gift and Alnwick succeeded him to this dignity.⁶

Meanwhile, there was continued difficulty over the archbishopric of York, which was only resolved after negotiations between the duke of Bedford and Martin V. These negotiations eventually resulted in the translation of Kemp from London to York⁷ and the provision of William Gray to London. The death of John Wakering, bishop of Norwich, on 9 April 1425,⁸ was followed, on 19 November, by that of Bishop Fordham of Ely. The council urged the monks of Ely to elect Alnwick but they chose their prior instead.⁹ This was unacceptable to the council which met, on 14 January 1426, with Bedford who had returned from France.¹⁰ It was resolved to

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1. The best description of events is contained in Davies, Ph.D., pp 340-63. Unless noted otherwise, the source for dates of bishops' deaths and promotions is *HBC*, pp 206, 240, 265.
 2. *CPR*, 1422-9, p 169.
 3. *PPC*, vol III, pp 210-12.
 4. 2 November 1424 (BL: Cottonian Ms. Cleopatra, CIV, f 175).
 5. *CPL*, vol. VII, p 408.
 6. *CPR*, 1422-9, p 348. (It was valued at up to 300 marks (*CPL*, VII, p 274). On 4 February 1426, Alnwick used the seal of the commissary of St Martin's on the letters of probate of John Fordham's will (*Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, p 329).
 7. 20 July 1425.
 8. NRO: Reg. 4/8: Register John Wakering, f 125.
 9. BL: Cottonian Ms. Titus A1, f 144v; Wharton, *Anglia Sacra*, vol. I, p 667.
 10. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 180-81. Alnwick is not among those recorded as present.

confirm Kemp at York and to ask the pope to provide Morgan to Ely, unless he had already been provided to Norwich, and Alnwick to Norwich unless he had already been provided to Ely in response to the council's earlier letters. Martin produced the required letters of provision on 27 February. Alnwick received the temporalities on 4 May and was consecrated by Archbishop Chichele at Canterbury on 18 August 1426.¹

Betcherman sees the disputed succession to York as an expression of factions in the council. She suggests that Chichele and the duke of Gloucester were supporting Morgan against Bishop Beaufort and the pope for Fleming, with the duke of Bedford successfully intervening on behalf of his own candidate, Bishop Kemp. She continues: 'Ely and Norwich, both 'fat' sees, were reserved for the Gloucester-Chichele forces. They went to Philip Morgan, the disappointed candidate for York, and William Alnwick, a partisan of theirs whose reward as keeper of the privy seal was overdue'.²

Was Alnwick's promotion due to his connection with a faction? He certainly seems to have been attached to Chichele but it is at least doubtful that Chichele was part of a Gloucester faction and it is even more difficult to establish a link between Gloucester and Alnwick. Certainly, in later years, any connection there may have been between Gloucester and Alnwick seems to have disappeared. Gloucester supported the abbots of St Albans and Bury St Edmunds in their attempts to preserve the exemption from the jurisdiction of Alnwick as bishop,³ and Alnwick was one of those who tried Gloucester's wife for witchcraft.⁴ In fact, there are more indications to link him with the Beauforts. Alnwick was a supervisor of the will of Thomas, duke of Exeter in 1427,⁵ and the processional cross that he gave to Lincoln cathedral was engraved

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1. CPL, vol. VII, p 476; CPR, 1422-9, p 333; Reg. Chich., vol. I, pp 93-94.
 2. Betcherman, 'The Making of Bishops', pp 408-9.
 3. See above, p 356.
 4. Ed. F.W.D. Brie, *The Brut, or Chronicles of England*, vol. II, EETS, vol. CXXXVI (1908), p 480.
 5. Reg. Chich., vol. II, pp 355-64.

'orate pro animabus domini Thome Bewford, etc.' It is possible that he was friendly with Marmaduke Lumley, a fellow Cambridge graduate of the Durham diocese, who was related to the Beauforts and at whose consecration he assisted.² As bishop of Norwich, he was to patronise William Aiscough, later bishop of Salisbury, who has been identified with a Beaufort-Suffolk party.³ Other close associates seem to have been Thomas Langley, bishop of Durham,⁴ and Ralph, Lord Cromwell.⁵

In fact, there is not much to prove that Alnwick was particularly attached to either a Beaufort or a Gloucester faction. He was present at the council meeting, of 26 February 1425, which decided to hand over the Tower of London to Richard Woodville, the act that seems to have done most to provoke Gloucester's fury against Beaufort.⁶ However, he was also one of the arbitrators between Beaufort and Gloucester, in March 1426,⁷ and he did not lose his position as keeper of the privy seal when Beaufort and Stafford lost theirs as chancellor and treasurer.⁸ Indeed, it is far more likely that, rather than being a member of any particular faction, Alnwick was, as Griffiths states, one of 'a solid core of devoted servants of Henry V who continued to protect the fortunes of his son'⁹ and that his connection with the duke of Exeter arose

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1. *Monasticon*, vol. VI, p 1280. (The 'etc' is in the text.)
 2. Borthwick Institute: Register 19: John Kempe (York), f 17.
 3. NRO: Reg 5/9: Register William Alnwick (Norwich), ff 53v, 93; Aiscough was often in attendance during the Norwich heresy trials, 1428-31 (Tanner, *Heresy Trials*, *passim*). Also, it may be significant that Alnwick and Aiscough were ordained, respectively, acolyte and deacon, on 21 December 1415, by Bishop Fordham's suffragan (Register Fordham (Ely), f 265).
 4. See above, p 360.
 5. They frequently served on the same commissions and Alnwick joined Cromwell in the foundation of Tattershall College (*CPR*, 1436-41, p 292).
 6. *PPC*, vol. III, p 167.
 7. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 297-98.
 8. *CCR*, 1422-9, p 269.
 9. Griffiths, *Henry VI*, p 38. He includes, in this group of Henry's servants, Archbishops Chichele and Kemp, Bishops Morgan, Langley and Stafford (despite the latter's replacement as treasurer), the duke of Exeter, the earl of Warwick and Lords Cromwell and Scrope, i.e. almost all the regular council attenders for this period!

out of this rather than any attachment to the bishop of Winchester.*

In fact, William Alnwick, with his legal training, early experience in ecclesiastical administration and history of royal service, was a natural candidate for promotion. He had had little time since his entry into the royal administration to devote his abilities to ecclesiastical service, but there are interesting pointers to his career as bishop: notably his involvement in Henry V's campaign to reform the Benedictines and the attempts to reconcile Dean Macworth with the Lincoln chapter. Perhaps the best indication for the future was the conscientious reliability that he seems to have displayed as king's secretary, keeper of the privy seal and member of the minority council. Henceforth this was to be directed mainly to the administration of his bishoprics and the service of the Church.

* I have changed my view slightly since writing this. See above, pp 295-301

APPENDIX II

TEXTS, NOW LOST, ASSOCIATED WITH BISHOP ALNWICK'S LINCOLN

PALACE CHAPEL AND HIS TOMB

1. Text from the windows of Bishop Alnwick's Lincoln Palace Chapel'

'In a window, just going into the Chapel, at the Bishop's Palace there,

*"Istam Virgo, novellam do tibi, meque, Capellam
Alnwyc; tu, pie, Natum fac mihi propitiatum."*

In every Window of the said Chapel Memorials of the said Bishop, as,

*"O benedicta satis, Flos et Rosa Virginitatis,
Luminis ad Regnum duc Alnwyc, Virgo, Willelmum.
O Pater! O Proles! O Consolatio! Flamen!
Quem refovere soles Alnwyc ostende Solamen.
Triplex Persona, sed simplex in Deitate,
Willelmum Alnwyc dona Celis, precor a te.
O Lux eterna, qua fulget Turma superna,
Post Vite Cursum rapias Alnwyc tibi sursum.
Principis almifici Genitrix, O digna Patrona,
Alnwyc Pontifici precor assistas Prece prona.
Principis.....Celi Dulcedine plena,
.....Alnwyc succure Wilemo"*

1. Taken from Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. II, pp 32-3

2. Text of the inscriptions on Bishop Alnwick's tomb in Lincoln cathedral'

'At Bishop Smith's Feet, this Circumspection, on a Brass, round a Marble.

*"Mortis vi rapide de mundi valle vocatus,
Alnwyc sub Lapide jacet hic Wilhelmus humatus.
Quondam privati Custos fuit ille Sigilli,
Noluit ille pati falsum, dum constitit illi.
Primo Norvici Pastoris fulsit Honore.
Postea multiplici stetit hic non absque Labore.
Multos sudores pro.....
..... Errores sua sicut Cor petivit.
Et heris Aularum proprius sit Participator,
Qui pretiosarum Domuum fuit edificator.
Anno C. X^{ti}. quater, M, quater X, Decade dempto
Uno, Mors isti nocuit Pretio Crucis empto.*

[Obiit Dec. 5. 1449.]"

'At the Feet of [his] Pourtraiture in Brass:

*"In Cinerem rediet Cinis, et nequit hic remanere.
Mortem non fugiet Homo natus de Muliere.
Ut Flos egreditur Estate virente decorâ,
Et cito conteritur, cum Mortis venerit Hora;
Hic Labor, hicque Dolor, hic Languor, et hic Ululatus;
Omnis transit Honor; Homo nunc, cras incineratus.
Si velis, si nolis, tua non hic Gloria stabit.
Et Patris et Prolis fera Vitam Mors superabit.
Decessit Solomon sapiens, mitis quoque David.
Fortis erat Sampson, tamen illum Mors superavit.
Me Mundus renuit, potior nunc Jure paterno
Quem Virgo genuit Regnum cum Rege superno.*

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1. From *ibid.*, p 15. Presumably this was composed by Alnwick's executors, perhaps by John Breton and Thomas Ryngrstede, the two executors who were canons of Lincoln cathedral.

APPENDIX: III

SOME CONTEMPORARY OPINIONS OF WILLIAM ALNIWICK

William Alnwick was a man who seems to have excited strong emotions, either in his favour or in opposition to him, in those he came across. The views of Abbot Curteys of Bury St Edmunds, the abbey of Crowland and the anonymous author of Giles' *Chronicle* are included in the text.¹ The following further extracts may perhaps serve both to illuminate his character and the characters of those he came across in the course of his career:

1. The View from St. Albans, c. 1432-4

In the course of the visitatorial duties which Alnwick undertook in his diocese of Norwich in 1432-3 he approached Binham where the prior and convent of Binham priory were thrown into confusion because:

*'Erat quippe Praesul magnus valde, magnus, videlicet, cum Rege, quia Confessor, et ejus conciliarius; magnus etiam cum plebe, quia pastor illius, et Ordinarius; magnus insuper cum omnibus regni proceribus, quia dudum, dum Custos Privati Sigilli fuerat, erat ipsis benevolus, maximamque benevolentiam in officio exhibebat.'*²

After the conclusion of the ensuing conflict between Bishop Alnwick and John Whethamstede, the abbot returned in triumph to St Albans where he regaled his brethren with his opinion of his opponents:

'Et harum prima erat pars actrix, Dominus, videlicet, Willelmus Alnewik, Episcopus Norwicensis, qui praelationis temporibus adeo ferox pugnaxque fuerat, ac audacia plenus, quod nec jaculo rationis, nec gladio exortationis, nec aliquo alio hujusmodi proeliationis instrumento, retrorsum volebat recedere; immo verius, ut alter gigas inexorabilis, instare semper audaciter incessanterque, pro viribus, in annulationem regiae libertatis, ac, ex consequenti, in captivationem supradicti sui Prioris, decertare. Et propterea, ut ipsum apud illos, in forma qua demeruit, inculpatum redderet, praeter alia varia super ipsius inexorabilitate immobilitateque elocuta, deflexit sermonem in personam ipsius, metricaeque proponens invexit contra eum, sub hiis verbis. -

*"Pastor magnifice, vellem te magnificare,
Viscera tincta Styge si scires mollificare:
Si scires precibus mansuescere flebilitatis,
Vellem te coetibus conjugere sanctificatis.
Si, veluti lapides quondam, sub carmine Lini,
Fiebant molles, cupiebant celtaeque findi,*

1. See above, pp 244, 246, 284-5, 324

2. *Amundesham*, vol. I, p 300.

Aut, velut Alecto mansuescebat furiendo,
 Quum peteret Manes, et psalleret aptius Orpheus,
 Velles incautum rogatu flectere votum,
 Vellem dulcisonis te magnificare Camoenis,
 Et Patrem patrum vocitare, piumque, modestum.
 Sed quia nec cithara, lyra, psalteriumve, viella,
 Scit semel accensam tibi tollere pectoris iram,
 Aut odium mentis, licet oret lacryma flentis;
 Hinc, quanquam modicam, pro proposita commoedia
 Describam satyram, canet hanc subrauca Thalia.
 Nomen¹ quale geris, in facto tale mereris,
 Talis es et more, qualis vocitaris ab ore.
 Quid sonat utrumque, per vulgus si reseretur,
 Dicet quidcunque latius ab arte loquetur.
 Nil nisi velle grave tibi signat nomen utrumque,
 Nam non 'Willelmus' quia vir es diceris almus,
 Nec quia more vires, 'Alwik' recte vocitaris,
 Immo magis, quia vis gravis est tua mota voluntas,
 Nec scis ab obliquo prece quavis cedere coepto.
 In male promissis nec verba nec acta rescindis,
 In meliusve tuum mutas revocabile votum.
 Non sic lex Canonis docet, aut te regula juris,
 Immo magis normam fert in rogitatibus istam, -
 'Si bona sit, bene stet res, pro qua tu rogeris,
 Si mala, mens variet, decet ut te sic modereris.'
 Ad veniam pronus, ubi culpa rogat venialis,
 Est vir quisque bonus, praesertim pontificalis;
 Ast acer in poenis et felle, saturque rigore,
 Est malus in frenis vitii, nec dignus honore.
 Quod docui disce, nec discere jam pudeat te;
 Est oleum vino languentibus aptius aspro,
 Virgaque vulnifico plus culpis grata flagello;
 Corrigit offensas data saepeque gratia gratis,
 Quam facit ex torta rigor, aut pietate remota.
 Si tibi propitium velis esse Deus pietatis,
 Expedit ut victum plerumque feras ruditatis.
 Mundus cum plures gignit quam flumina pisces
 Indoctos homines, forsitan meus est Prior unus,
 Hinc infrunitis alias ignoscito factis,
 Nec semper subitis ea puniat ultio scriptis.
 Parcere nam stratis vult nobilis ira leonis;
 Tu parcas et eis, qui feris sis melior ipsis.
 Quod si doctrinis adquiescere spreveris istis,
 Tunc similis venia quam tu flenti tribuisti,
 Sit tibi, non alia, quia non aliter meruisti.
 Gratia propitio sit laus ac gloria Christo,
 Vincere de tanto qui fecit nos inimico"²

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1. At this point occurs the note about the bishop's later kindness to Whethamstede. (See above, p 253)
 2. Amundesham, vol. I, pp 363-5

2. Letter requesting the translation of Bishop Alnwick to Lincoln

On 24 May 1436 the following privy seal letter was written from King Henry VI to Pope Eugenius IV, requesting that the pope translate William Alnwick from Norwich to Lincoln:

'Beatissime pater devotissima recommendacione filiali premissa Lincolniensis ecclesie que iam vacat per ampla dioces' que un² & ultra comitatum spacio diffunditur hoc exposit ut pro animarum cura inibi exercenda pastor preficiatur ydoneus talis videlicet qui in animarum cura probatus circa regimen gregis tanti nedum praesse valeat potuit set prodesse. Cum igitur pater sancte iam pridem recolende memorie Willmo' dicte ecclesie Lyncoln' pontifice vita functo ipsius ecclesii capitulum cupiens tam memorate ecclesia quam cure parochianorum eiusdem de pastore habili & ydoneo provider' venerabilem in Christo patrem Willelmum Norwicensem Episcopum confessorem nostrum virum utique omni vite sanctitate probatum a vestra beatitudine in prelibate ecclesie antistitem & pastorem Spiritu Sancto ut credimus inspirante³ duxerint postulandum Nos, considerantes mores & merita dicti postulati & presertim continuatas & indefessas sollicitudines & diligencias quibus circa animarum salutem & precipue circa heresum & errorum extirpacionem in suis civitate & diocese Norwicensi post susceptas insulas eiusdem exactissime insudavit cui per paucas infra regnum nostrum Anglie animarum in regimine pares existimamus, arbitantes nichilominus quod eiusdem operatione & industria circa curam eidem vestra mediante gratia in ipsa ecclesia Lyncoln' committendam eiusque civitate & diocesi non minor sed multiplicior surescet fructus ac angelo suppremi consilii cor suum in dies de bono in melius illustrante ad ipsius honorem & complacenciam prosperabitur ut optamus, Beatitudine vestre supplicare decrevimus quatinus nedum ad nostri cordis in ea parte beneplacitum exequendum quin ymmo ad memorate ecclesie Lyncoln' utilitatem eximiam quam intime affectamus prelibato venerabili patri confessori nostro vestre apostolice [Sanctitatis]⁴ licenciam impartiri dignenum concedendo eidum ut a vinculo quo ecclesie Norwicen' astringitur absolutus ab eadem licentia migrare possit ad ecclesiam Lyncoln' memoratam eamque optinere et assequi cum suis iuris et pertinenciis unversis. Sanctissime pater Beatitudinem vestram in omni prosperitat' augmento per tempora diuturna conservare dignetur trinitas increata.

Note: Scripta, etc. 24 May 14 Henry VI [1436]

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1. PRO: E 28/57 (24 May 1436). A version is printed in *Foedera*, vol. V, part I, p 31.
 2. *Foedera* has 'septem'.
 3. This is written above the cancelled word 'instigante'.
 4. Only in *Foedera*.

3. The opinion of Piero da Monte

Soon after the provision of William Aiscough to the diocese of Salisbury, Pope Eugenius IV attempted to provide his nephew, Peter Barbo (the future Paul II), to Aiscough's now vacated canonry and prebend of Sutton-cum-Buckingham in Lincoln cathedral. Bishop Alnwick collated the canonry to Nicholas Dixon, despite all the efforts of the papal collector, Piero da Monte, to make him change his mind. Da Monte's opinion of Alnwick is revealed in his correspondence:

a) Letter to Peter Barbo, c. June - September 1438¹

'Dedi quam potui operam apud episcopum Lincolnensem, ut possessionem prebende tibi a pontifice collate me apprehendere pateretur. Id enim conducere honori suo atque obedientie quam debet pontifici maximo convenire. Subsistit is parumper neque quid responderet satis scire videbatur, petit tandem deliberandi tempus. Cui cum lubens annuissem, redii ad eum post diem conventum. Ille sibi undique imminere pericula respondit. Si enim pontificis mandatis contradiceret, periurii et inobedientie crimen committere se dicebat; si vero obtemperaret, statuta regia que omnium bonorum confiscationem minantur magnopere formidabat. Ego carmen illud poeticum sibi commemorans "inter utrumque vola, medio tutissimus ibis", ad hec pericula evitanda medium quoddam iter sibi ostendi, super quo deliberandi tempus iterum postulatavit. Incertus ex his sum quam maxime et ideo nihil certi scribere hactenus volui. Hic episcopus rusticanus homo est et ex villi genere natus, verum regiis precibus exaltatus. Itaque arbitror eum regias leges magis quam divinas et ecclesiasticas servaturum. Duri preterea est capitis et inexorabilis. Velim tamen credas in hac re neque assiduatatem neque studium neque diligentiam defuturam, ut honori atque auctoritati pontificis, tuo quoque desiderio satisfaciam. Atque utinam id possem quod volo aut ea esset Romane ecclesie quies, ut qui non obtemperant, coerceri penis possent! Fecissem profecto te iam diu tam honesti voti compotem. Sed ea est rerum ac temporum conditio, ut satius esse videatur paululum cedere, quam omnia subversioni exponere. Prudentis aiunt esse naute, cum navis, procellis ac fluctibus agitur, pauculas merces in mare abicere, ut hac alleviatione navem ipsam cum reliquis salvam faciat.

b) Letter to Cardinal Scarampo c. June - September 1438²

'... Nam et ego non omnino despero, quoniam pontifex Lincolnensis vehementer timet voluntati pontificis adversari. Id polliceor, quemcunque res exitum habeat, neque studium neque diligentiam meam unquam defuturam. ...'

1. Haller, *Piero da Monte*, pp 73-5.
2. *Ibid.*, pp 75-6.

c) Letter to Peter Barbo 1 October 1438¹

'Ea enim est istorum hominum conditio, ut cum alterius auxilio indigent, illi arrideant blandiantur et multa ac magna se facturos polliceantur. At cum voti compotes facti sunt, videntur veterum promissionum omnino esse immemores. Ego ab hoc episcopo Lincolniensi bona semper verba de re tua habui, ex quibus in magnam spem veni potiundi tuo nomine beneficii. Quis enim non crederet seni et multorum annorum episcopo atque ea que in eius sunt potestate pollicenti? Ea si tibi scripsissem, nunc te derisum doleres eamque fabam in me cuderes. Nescio enim quo consilio ductus nunc, cum illum convenio petoque, ut tandem possessionem mihi habere liceat, sensi eum omnia in contrarium mutasse ac prebendam tuam alter contulisse, in maximam tuam, immo pontificis et Romane ecclesie iniuriam. Doleo ego ob hanc rem non parum atque animo crucior, cum ob pontificis dignitatem, tum ob commoditatem tuam. Exegisses enim ex eo beneficio circiter aureos quadringentos, quos tibi huius rusticani episcopi perfidia et inobedientia - sic enim compellor loqui - sublatos esse, pro mea in te observantia non possum non dolere. Tuum nunc erit hec nota pontifici facere et ne suo ac sedis apostolice honori tuoque commodo deesse velit pro viribus impetrare. Mittam tibi per numularios de Albertis post hos paucos dies pecuniam quam exegi ex prebenda Eboracensi. Tu vero in aliis regnis atque provinciis, quibus maior pontifici in beneficiorum collationibus prestatur obedientia, tibi provideri stude. Hic enim opulenta beneficia a pontifice consequi aut impossibile aut certe summe difficile iudicio. Vale.'

1. *Ibid.*, pp 76-7.

APPENDIX IV

THE CANONS OF LINCOLN CATHEDRAL, 1436-1449

The following list of canons of Lincoln cathedral contemporary with William Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate is appended because of the inaccuracy of several of the entries in volumes I and XII of John Le Neve, *Fasti Ecclesiae Anglicanae, 1300-1541*, ed. H.P.F. King and J.M. Horn respectively (1962, 1967). The order of entries follows that in the *Fasti* for ease of comparison, as does the spelling of names. Footnotes are only appended when the text or its sources differ from the *Fasti*. For details of many of these men's careers, see not only *BRUC* and *BRVO* but also *Visitations I*, pp 172-214. References are to records in the LAO.

Dean

John Mackworth, 1412-1452

Subdean

M. John Percy B.Cn.L. 1419-1458

Archdeacons of Lincoln

M. Richard Caudray 1431-1458

Archdeacons of Huntingdon

M. William Lassells Lic.Cn. & C.L. 1421-1443

D. by 26 Aug. 1443¹

M. Richard Morsby B.Cn. & C.L. ?1443-1462

An induction 15 November 1443 (no name)²

Archdeacons of Northampton

M. William Gray M.A. 1434-1454

Archdeacons of Leicester

M. Thomas Barnesley M.A. 1430, 1448-9

Occ. between 14 Sept. 1448 and 14 Sept. 1449³

Archdeacons of Oxford

M. John Southam Lic.C.L. 1404-1441

M. William Lyndwood, D.Cn. & C.L. ? 1441-1442

Coll. 10 May 1438, inducted between 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441,⁴ Bishop of St Davids 1442

M. Fulk Birmingham B.Cn.L. ?1442-1467

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1442 and 14 Sept. 1443⁵

-
1. His will was proved 26 Aug. 1443 (LAO: A 2/33, f 44v). According to Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. II, p 10, died 22 Aug. 1453 - probably mistake for 1443.
 2. LAO: Bj 2/13, f 51.
 3. Bj 2/15, f 18. See also *BRVO*, vol. I, p 112 where suggests he remained as archdeacon till death, 7 Aug 1454. Likely as successor received collation 14 Aug. 1454.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 107. *Visitations I*, p 183 states that the record of his collation (Linc. Reg., f 107) was an error and so *Fasti I*, p 14 omits it. However, Lyndwood's induction is recorded between 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441 (Bj 2/12, f 5v).
 5. Bj 2/13, f 19.

Archdeacons of Buckingham

M. Thomas Beckington D.C.L. 1424-1443

M. Richard Andrew D.C.L. 1443-after 1465

Archdeacons of Bedford

William Derby ?-1438

M. Robert Thornton D.C.L. 1439-1450

Archdeacons of Stow

M. William Lyndwood D.Cn. & C.L. 1434-1440/1¹

M. William Scrope B.Cn. & C.L. 1440/1-1443/4

Ind. between 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441.² To Stow Longa
between 14 Sept. 1443 and 14 Sept. 1444³

M Peter Irford or Beverlay D.Th. 1443/4-1452

Inducted between 14 Sept. 1443 and 14 Sept. 1444⁴

Precentors

M. Robert Burton D.Th. 1427-1445

'Recessit' between 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445⁵

John Wyllie 1444/5-1445

Instal. before 14 Sept. 1445⁶

M. John Kylborn M.A. 1445-1448

M. Alexander Prowet Lic.Cn.L. 1448-1471

Treasurers

M John Haket B.Cn.L. 1406-1442

M. Thomas Skeyman 1442-1446

D. 28 Jan. 1446⁷

M. John Smeton 1446-1448

Ind. before 14 Sept. 1446⁸

M. John Crosby B.Cn.L., D.C.L. 1448-1477

Chancellors

M. Peter Partrich D.Th. 1424-51

D. 10 Jan. 1451⁹

Prebendaries of Aylesbury

Thomas Chichele 1434-1438

M. John Forster 1438-1440

M. John Beverley D.Th. 1440/1-1458

-
1. See p 384, note 4.
 2. Bj 2/12, f 5v.
 3. Bj 2/13, f 51.
 4. *Ibid.*
 5. Bj 2/13, f '24'.
 6. *Ibid.*
 7. Bj 2/14, f 71v.
 8. *Ibid.*, f 47v.
 9. Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. II, p 22.

Prebendaries of All Saints in Hungate

M. John Stone Sch.Th.?-1449

Occ. between 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441¹

Simon Say 1449-1451

Prebendaries of Asgarby

M. William Scrope B.Cn. & C.L. 1431-1437

Walter Adams 1437-1439

M. Adam Moleyns D.C.L. 1439-1445

Stephen Kirkby 1445, 1451

Prebendaries of Banbury

John Forest 1401-1446

M. Robert Appleby B.Cn. & C.L. 1446-1458

Ind. by 14 Sept. 1446²

Prebendaries of Bedford Major

M. Nicholas Billesden D.C.L. 1434-1441

M. William Hoper D.C.L.³

M. John Derby D.C.L. 1445-1447

M. Thomas Salisbury B.Cn.L. 1447-1459

Prebendaries of Bedford Minor

M. William Hoper D.C.L. 1435-1440/1

Henry Hanslap 1440/1, 1445/6

Ind. between 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441⁴

M. John Bradeston 1447/8-1449

Occ. between 14 Sept. 1447 and 14 Sept. 1448 (not 1446-7)⁵

M. Robert Wymbyssh B.Cn.L. 1449-1465

Prebendaries of Biggleswade

M. John Forster 1423-1438

M. Thomas Chichele 1438-1467

Prebendaries of St. Botolph

Thomas Woodford or Belton 1423-?

Thomas Belton occ. between 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441⁶

M. Thomas Skayman 1442/3

Ind. between 14 Sept. 1442 and 14 Sept. 1443⁷

Philip Tylney 1444-1453

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1. Bj 2/12, f 13v. See also *Visitations* I, pp 184-5 - suggests probably received collation 1430.
 2. Bj 2/14, f 57v.
 3. Mentioned as predecessor of John Derby (Bj 2/13, f '6'v).
 4. Bj 2/12, f 6.
 5. Not 1446-7 as *Fasti* I, p 36 (Bj 2/14, f 108v).
 6. Bj 2/12, f 13v.
 7. Bj 2/13, f 19.

Prebendaries of Brampton

M. John Marshall 1407-1440

M. Thomas Ringstede B.Cn.L. 1440-1444/5¹

M. Richard Caudray 1444/5-1458

Ind. between 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445²

Prebendaries of Buckden

M. John Deeping Lic.C.L. 1427-1445/6

Vac. after his death between 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446³

M. William Alnwick 1445/6-1461

Ind. between 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446⁴

Prebendaries of Carlton Kyme or Carlton-Cum-Dalby

Robert Rolleston 1436-1451

Prebendaries of Carlton Paynell or Carlton-Cum-Thurlby

M. Thomas Warde D.Cn.L. ?-1448

M. William Witham D.C.L. 1448-?1450⁵

Prebendaries of Caistor

M. Ric Hethe B.Th. 1415-1443

Robert Wetheryngsete 1444

Adm. 21 March 1444⁶

M. Thomas Ringstede B.Cn.L. 1444/5-1454

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445⁷

Prebendaries of Centum Solidorum or of De Prepositis

Thomas Southworth 1401-1446

M. John Stokes D.C.L. 1446-1457

Prebendaries of Clifton

M. John Carpenter D.Th. 1431-1439

Thomas Riby 1439-?

Prebendaries of Corringham

M. Richard Caudray 1435-1444/5

to Brampton prebend between 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445

M. William Hoper D.Cn. & C.L. 1445/6-1454

Ind. between 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446⁸

Prebendaries of Crackpole St. Mary

Roger Merssh 1433-1459

-
1. *Fasti* XII, p 21 is incorrect in depriving him of his degree. See *BRUC*, pp 499-500.
 2. Bj 2/13, f '12'.
 3. Bj 2/14, f 52.
 4. *Ibid.*, f 57v.
 5. M. John Perche ind. to this prebend 26 July 1450 but Witham's induction to Stoke, 8 July 1450, cancelled (Bj 2/15, f 35v).
 6. A 2/33, f 31v.
 7. Bj 2/13, ff 6v, 12, 24.
 8. Bj 2/14, f 57v.

Prebendaries of Cropredy

M. Robert Allerton B.C.L. 1420-1437

Robert Felton 1437-1438

Fulk Birmingham 1438-?

Prebendaries of Decem Librarum

Walter Schiryngton 1420-1449

M. Clement Denston B.Th. 1449-?

Ind. 19 April 1449. Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1450 and 14 Sept. 1451¹

Prebendaries of Dunham and Newport

M. John Burdet 1432-?

John Walpole 1440/1

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441²

M. John Tiryngton B.Cn. & C.L. ?-1444

M. Thomas Skeyman 1444-1446

D. 28 January 1446³

M. Thomas Loughborough 1446-1450

Ind. before 14 Sept. 1446⁴

Prebendaries of Empingham

M. John Langton 1433-1447

M. Stephen Wilton, 1447-1457

Prebendaries of Farndon-cum-Balderton

Thomas Kemp ?-1450

Prebendaries of Gretton

M. Richard Morsby B.Cn & C.L. 1433-1462

Prebendaries of Haydour-cum-Walton

Thomas Savage ? - 1440/1

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441⁵

M. Alan Kyrketon 1440/1-1443

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441.⁶ Died 21 August 1443⁶

M. William Percy 1443-1452

Prebendaries of Ketton

Nicholas Wymbyssh 1427-1461

Prebendaries of Lafford or Sleaford

Nicholas Clerke 1434-1441

M. Simon Alcock D.Th. 1441-1459

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441⁷

1. Bj 2/15, ff 9v, 72v.

2. Bj 2/12, f 13v.

3. Bj 2/14, f 71v.

4. *Ibid.*, f 57v.

5. Bj 2/12, f 13v.

6. *Ibid.*, f 5v.

7. Bj 2/12, f 5v.

Prebendaries of Langford Ecclesia

William Booth 1434-1440/1

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441¹

M. John Stokes D.C.L. 1441-1449

Prebendaries of Langford Manor

M. Robert Sutton B.C.L. 1435-1438

[M. Thomas Beckington D.C.L. 1438 - did not obtain]

M. Thomas Colas D.Cn & C.L. 1438-1439

M. John Burdet ?-1449

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441²

M. John Bradeston B.Cn.L 1449-1457

Prebendaries of Leicester St Margaret

M. Reginald Kentewode B.C.L. 1429-1441

John Walpole 1444/5

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445³

M. William Byconel D.C.L. 1444/5-1448

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445⁴

M. John Wardall D.C.L. 1448-1472

Prebendaries of Leighton Buzzard

M. Thomas Walton B.C.L. 1419-1451

Prebendaries of Leighton Ecclesia

M. Richard Leyott D.C.L. 1419-1449

M. William Walesby 1449-1458

Prebendaries of Leighton Manor

M. Robert Thurgarton B.Th 1415-1436/7

Exch. preb. for preb. in chapel royal Windsor 1436-7⁵

William Brewster 1437-1465

Prebendaries of Liddington

M John Edderston M.D. 1427-1455

Prebendaries of Louth

Alan Humberton 1421-1440

M. John Marshall B.Th. 1440-1446

M. Thomas Ludham 1446-1455

Ind. 14 Oct. 1446⁶

Prebendaries of Marston St Lawrence

M. William Berford D.Th. 1422-1450

1. Bj 2/12, f 13v

2. *Ibid.*, f 12v

3. Bj 2/13, f '6'v

4. *Ibid.*, f '12'; also noted as having been inducted between 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446 (Bj 2/14, f 57v)

5. A 2/32, f 120v

6. Bj 2/14, f 81

Prebendaries of St Martin's in Derneſtall

John Sadington 1436-1438

John Werkworth 1438-1445

M. John Auncell B.Cn. & C.L. 1445-1452

Prebendaries of Milton Ecclesia

Robert Fleming 1430-1467

Prebendaries of Milton Manor

Richard Petteworth 1424-1458

Prebendaries of Naſſington

John Mackworth 1422-1452

Prebendaries of Norton Episcopi

M. John Bathe 1433-1438

M. Adelard Welby 1438-?1444¹

Robert Monter 1445, 1449

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445²

Prebendaries of North Kelsey

M. Thomas Whiston D.Cn.L. 1424-1437

Fulk Birmingham 1437-1438

M. Thomas Ludham 1438-?

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446³

M. John Derby D.C.L. 1447-1456

Prebendaries of Sanctae Crucis or Spaldwick

M. John Southam Lic.C.L. 1420-?⁴

M. John Leek B.Cn.L. 1439-1462

Prebendaries of Scamblesby or Melton Roſſ-cum-Scamblesby

M. John Haket D.C.L. 1435-1442

William Percy 1442-1443

M. John Arundell 1443-1459

Prebendaries of South Scarle

Thomas Lyes 1408-1437

M. Ralph Knolles D.C.L. 1437-1451

Prebendaries Sexaginta Solidorum

Thomas Petham 1435-?

Occ. Oct. 1437⁵

M. Thomas Ludham ?-1438

Thomas Ryſham 1438-?

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441⁶

-
1. Recorded as having vacated preb. betw. 14 Sept. 1443 and 14 Sept. 1444 (Bj 2/13, f 49v-50v); and betw. 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445 (*ibid*, f '12'v).
 2. Bj 2/13, f '12'.
 3. Bj 2/14, f 71v.
 4. Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441, but entry cancelled (Bj 2/12, f 13v).
 5. LCS, vol. III, p 378 (bishop's visitation).
 6. Bj 2/12, f 13v.

Prebendaries of Stoke

M. Richard Burnham Sch.Th. 1421-1457

Prebendaries of Stow St Mary or Stow-in-Lindsey

William Derby 1427-1438

M. John Tirynghton B.Cn & C.L. 1438-?

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441¹

M. John Sutton B.C.L. 1447-1460

Prebendaries of Stow Longa

Nicholas Dixon 1433-1438

M. Peter Irford or Beverlay D.Th. 1438-1443/4

To archdeaconry of Stow betw. 14 Sept. 1443 and 14 Sept. 1444²

M. William Scrope B.Cn. & C.L. 1443/4-1448

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1443 and 14 Sept. 1444³

Henry Hanslap 1448-1452

Prebendaries of Sutton-cum-Buckingham

M. William Ascough D.Th. 1435-1438

Nicholas Dixon 1438-1448

(Peter Barbo O.S.B. 1438 - not successful)

John Breton 1448-1465

Prebendaries of Thame

M. William Gray 1435-1454

Prebendaries of Thorngate

M. William Lassells Lic. Cn. & C.L. 1435-?

Occ. betw. 14 Sept. 1440 and 14 Sept. 1441; will proved 26 August 1443, probably died 22 August⁴

An unidentified induction 7 December 1443⁵

M. Thomas Loughborough 1444/5-1445/6

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1444 and 14 Sept. 1445⁶

M. John Smeton 1445/6-1448

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446⁷

M. John Crosby B.Cn.L., D.C.L. 1448-1471

Prebendaries of Welton Beckhall

Richard Ingoldesby 1427-1448

Robert Kirkham 1448-?

Prebendaries of Welton Brinkhall

M. Nicholas Burton B.C.L. 1435-1438

M. Thomas Colas D.Cn. & C.L. 1438

M. Robert Beaumont B.Cn & C.L. 1439-?

1. Bj 2/12, f 13v.

2. Bj 2/13, f 51.

3. *Ibid.*

4. Bj 2/12, f 13v; A 2/33, f 44v. Peck, *Desiderata Curiosa*, vol. II, p 10 records death as 22 August 1453.

5. Bj 2/13, f 51.

6. *Ibid.*, f '24'.

7. Bj 2/14, f 57v.

Prebendaries of Welton Paynshall

Richard Selby 1425-1447

John Breton 1447-1448

M. William Sprever D.C.L. 1448-1460

Prebendaries of Welton Ryval

Robert Iwardeby 1427-1438

M. John Proctour B.Cn.L. 1438-1444

M. William Hoper D.Cn & C.L. 1444-1445/6¹

M. Walter Sandwich D.Cn. & C.L. 1445/6-1452

Ind. betw. 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446²

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1. Inducted to Corringham prebend between 14 Sept. 1445 and 14 Sept. 1446 (Bj 2/14, f 57v).
 2. *Ibid.*.

APPENDIX V

BISHOP ALNWICK'S ORDINATION CEREMONIES

1. ORDINATIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF NORWICH, 1426-1437

Bishop Alnwick and his suffragan, Bishop Ryngman, followed customary practice by ordaining on the four Saturdays of the Ember Weeks. Ordinations were also celebrated on the Saturday of Holy Week and '*Sitientes*' Saturday, i.e. the day before Passion Sunday. The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross was on 14 September, and that of St Lucy on 13 December.¹ The locations they used varied, although Bishop Alnwick most often ordained in Norwich cathedral and Ryngman in the chapel of the bishop's palace at Norwich.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Ref.</u> ²
21 Sept. 1426	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Ryngman ³	Norwich palace chapel	f 118
21 Dec. 1426	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Ryngman	"	f 118v
15 Mar. 1427	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Ryngman	"	f 119
5 Apr. 1427	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Ryngman	"	f 119v
19 Apr. 1427	Holy Saturday	Ryngman	"	f 120
14 Jun. 1427	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Ryngman	"	f 120
20 Sep. 1427	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Ryngman	"	f 120v
20 Dec. 1427	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Alnwick	Church of Dominican friary, Thetford	f 121
28 Feb. 1428	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 121v
20 Mar. 1428	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Ryngman	"	f 122
3 Apr. 1428	Holy Saturday	Ryngman	Scoulton parish church	f 122v

1. HBD, pp 47, 55, 60-1.

2. All references are to Norw. Reg.

3. Robert Ryngman, bishop *Gradensis*, William Alnwick's suffragan 1426-37.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
29 May 1428	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 123
18 Sep. 1428	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 123v
18 Dec. 1428	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Alnwick	Lavenham parish church	f 124
19 Feb. 1429	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 124v
12 Mar. 1429	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 125v
26 Mar. 1429	Holy Saturday	Alnwick	"	f 126
21 May 1429	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 126v
24 Sep. 1429	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Ryngman	"	f 127
17 Dec. 1429	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Ryngman	"	f 127v
11 Mar. 1430 ¹	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 128
1 Apr. 1430	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	Church of St Mary's Augustinian priory Walsingham	f 128v
15 Apr. 1430	Holy Saturday	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 129
10 Jun. 1430	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 129v
23 Sep. 1430	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Alnwick	"	f 130
23 Dec. 1430	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Ryngman	"	f 130v
24 Feb. 1431	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Ryngman	"	f 131
17 Mar. 1431	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Ryngman	"	f 131v

1. This is the Ember Saturday in the first week of Lent; however, the text also says the 14th kalend of March, which was 16 February. *Visitations II*, p 410 wrongly dates this to 16 March.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
31 Mar. 1431	Holy Saturday	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	'
26 May 1431	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 132
22 Sep. 1431	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Ryngman	"	f 133
22 Dec. 1431	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Ryngman	"	f 133v
15 Mar. 1432	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 134
5 Apr. 1432	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	"	f 135
19 Apr. 1432	Holy Saturday	Alnwick	"	f 135v
14 Jun. 1432	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Alnwick	Collegiate church of St Gregory, Sudbury	f 136
20 Dec. 1432	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 136v
7 Mar. 1433	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Alnwick	Thornage parish church	f 137
28 Mar. 1433	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	"	f 137v
11 Apr. 1433	Holy Saturday	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 138
6 Jun. 1433	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Alnwick	"	f 138v
19 Sep. 1433 ²	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Alnwick	"	f 139
19 Dec. 1433	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Alnwick	Church of Fransiscan friary at Babwell, near Bury St Edmunds	f 139v
20 Feb. 1434	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 140

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1. Slip of parchment between folios 131 and 132.
 2. Text says XIIIJ kalend October, which is 18th September, but that was not a Saturday.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
13 Mar. 1434	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 140
27 Mar. 1434 ¹	Holy Saturday	Ryngman	Church of Mountjoy Augustinian priory	f 140v
22 May 1434	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 141
18 Sep. 1434	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Alnwick	Hoxne parish church	f 141v
2 Apr. 1435	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 142v
16 Apr. 1435	Holy Saturday	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 142
11 Jun. 1435	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 143
24 Sep. 1435	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Ryngman	?	f 143v
17 Dec. 1435	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 143v
3 Mar. 1436	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 144v
24 Mar. 1436	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	Thornage parish church	f 145
7 Apr. 1436	Holy Saturday	Ryngman	?	f 145v
2 Jun. 1436	Ember Saturday in Pentecost Week	Alnwick	Norwich cathedral	f 145v
22 Sep. 1436	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Alnwick	?	f 146
22 Dec. 1436	Ember Saturday after St Lucy	Ryngman	Norwich palace chapel	f 146v

1. Text says 20 March but that was not Holy Saturday.

2. EVIDENCE FOR ORDINATIONS IN THE DIOCESE OF LINCOLN, 1436-1449

There is no surviving ordination register for William Alnwick's Lincoln episcopate. Consequently, the evidence for ordinations by Alnwick as bishop of Lincoln is minimal. There are only three dates on which one can be fairly certain that such ceremonies took place. They were as follows:

<u>Date</u>	<u>Feast</u>	<u>Bishop</u>	<u>Place</u>
21 Sep. 1437	Ember Saturday after Exaltation of Cross	Alnwick	Sleaford ¹
20 Feb. 1445	Ember Saturday in first week of Lent	Alnwick	Lyddington church ²
13 Mar. 1445	Saturday of <i>Sitientes</i> Office	Alnwick	Beaconsfield church ³

In addition, candidates for ordination were nominated to the bishop by the cathedral chapter in September 1438 and February 1439.⁴

Candidates were also nominated for ordination by the bishop or his suffragan by the abbeys of Ramsey in September 1437, June 1438 and February 1439;⁵ and Peterborough in February and December 1445, March 1446, and June and September 1447.⁶

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1. Candidates presented by Lincoln cathedral chapter for ordination on that date (LAO: A 2/32, f 125).
 2. Court book, p 99; *Eng. Clergy*, p 222.
 3. Court book, p 99; *Eng. Clergy*, p 223.
 4. LAO: A 2/32, f 134; A 2/33, f 7.
 5. BL: Add. Ms. 33450, ff 8, 10v, 11.
 6. CUL: Peterborough Ms. 2, ff 7v, 14v, 17v, 18, 21, 22.

APPENDIX VI
WILLIAM ALNWICK'S COURTS OF AUDIENCE

1. CHRONOLOGY OF HERESY PROCEEDINGS IN DIOCESE OF NORWICH, 1428-31¹

<u>1428</u>			
<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Judge</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
2 Sept.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	32
13 Sept.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick ²	
5 Oct.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	38
7 Oct	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	41
14 Dec.	St James's, church Bury St Edmunds	Bishop Alnwick ³	
15 Dec.	The George, Bury St St Edmunds and Bury St Edmunds Abbey	Bishop Alnwick ³	
18 Dec	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	39
<u>1429</u>			
15 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	51
18 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	54, 59
21 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	62
22 Mar.	Parlour of Thorpe manor	Bishop Alnwick	64, 66
31 Mar.	Thorpe manor chapel	Bishop Alnwick	69, 70

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1. All references are to page numbers of *Trials* unless specifically stated otherwise.
 2. The trial of William White as recorded in *FZ*, pp 417-32. For this very important case, Bishop Alnwick was assisted by William Worsted the prior of the cathedral; Thomas Walden alias Netter, prior provincial of the Carmelites; John Lowe, prior provincial of the Austin friars; Thomas Sharington, Thomas Garstone, Clement Felmingham, Walter Thetford, Austin friars; William Thorpe, John Thorpe, John Keninghale, Peter St Faith, Carmelites; John Elys, Robert Colman, Franciscans; John Gaysle, Dominican; James Walsingham, William Bernham, Thomas Ryngrstede, 'et multis aliis'.
 3. Norw. Reg. f 108.

1429, ctd

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Judge</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
1 Apr.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	43
10 Apr.	' <i>in quodam claustro infra</i> ' Norwich palace	John Exeter	71
18 Apr.	' <i>in domo officii registri</i> ' in Norwich palace	John Exeter	73
5 July	' <i>in claustro ducente ad celarium vini</i> '	John Exeter	75
20 Aug.	Thorpe manor chapel	Bishop Alnwick	79
27 Aug.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	84
23 Oct.	John Exeter's house, Norwich	John Exeter	89

1430

2 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	92, 98
3 Mar.	St Mary in the Fields Norwich	Bishop Alnwick	94
8 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	103, 105
10 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	105
20 Mar.	Thornage manor hall	Bishop Alnwick	90
18 Apr.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	107, 114, 119, 125, 130, 133
20 Apr.	St. James's church Bury St Edmunds	Bishop Alnwick	100
4 Aug.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	138, 149, 155
5 Aug.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	157, 163, 168
7 Aug.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	150, 156, 173
19 Aug.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	175
21 Aug.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	177

1430 ctd

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Judge</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
20 Sept.	' <i>In camera principali</i> ' of Norwich palace	Bishop Alnwick	181
20 Sept.	Norwich palace chapel	Bishop Alnwick	187
22 Sept.	' <i>in quodam claustro</i> ' in Norwich palace	Bishop Alnwick	189
9 Dec.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	77, 191, 192
20 Dec.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	193

1431'

17 Feb.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	196
2 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	198
5 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	200
13 Mar.	St Stephen's church Norwich	William Bernham	202
14 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	204, 207, 208, 210, 212, 213
16 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	201
23 Mar.	Norwich palace chapel	William Bernham	210, 211, 213 214, 216

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1. At some time between 1430-1, William Bernham heard the case of Nicholas Canon of Eye (Foxe, vol. III, pp 599-600).

2. CHRONOLOGY OF SESSIONS OF BISHOP ALNWICK'S LINCOLN
COURT OF AUDIENCE, 1444-1449'

1444

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Judge + assistants²</u>	<u>Ref.</u>
11 June	Hall of bishop's manor at Buckden	Bishop + John Depyng, Thomas Thorpe, Thomas Colstone	91
26 June	Wooburn church	John Depyng + William Waltham, Thomas Bullock, many others, Thomas Colstone	91
8 July	?Totteridge ³ church	John Depyng + William at Mile, priest, Robert Parker, John Bugg	91
15 July	Wooburn church	John Depyng + William Waltham, Peter Thorton, John Bugg	91
19 July	Buckden church	John Depyng + Thomas Thorpe	91
23 July	Buckden church	John Depyng	91
? Sept.	Lyddington church	John Derby	39
12 Oct.	Lincoln cathedral	John Depyng	40
4 Dec.	Lyddington church	John Derby	1
11 Dec.	Lyddington church	John Derby	2
15 Dec.	Lyddington church	John Derby	40
17 Dec.	Lyddington church	? John Derby + Thomas Colstone, John Depyng (?jnr), John Bugg	2

1445

11 Jan.	Lincoln cathedral	John Depyng + Robert Colstr' rector of Westmill, Peter Thornton, John Bugg	2
15 Mar.	Wooburn church	John Derby	3
6 April	Buckden church	John Depyng + John Depyng jnr, Peter Thornton, others	3

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1. All references are to page numbers in the Court book.
 2. The names of presiding judges are recorded first followed by those listed as assisting or present.
 3. 'Tateryge'. The bishop of Ely had a house at Totteridge (Aston, *Thomas Arundel*, p 266).

1445 ctd.

16 Aug.	Wooburn parish church	John Depyng	89
30 Aug. ¹	Registry at Old Temple	John Depyng + Peter Thornton, John Wryrlott	89
15 Sep.	?	John Depyng	89
9 Dec.	Totteridge chapel	John Derby + Thomas Colstone	69, 79,80

1446

[14 Feb.	London	Bishop	90] ²
14 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	?	79
23 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	39
11 April	Hall of bishop's manor at Nettleham	Bishop + John Derby, John Bugg, John Breton	41
12 April	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	4
15 April	Registry at Nettleham	John Derby	4
26 April	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	41, 43,90
28 April	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	41,43
29 April	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	42
2 May	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby + John Tylney, John Smeton, John Bugg	5
3 May	Registry at Nettleham	John Derby	43
4 May	Sleaford church	John Derby	41
10 May	Sleaford church	John Derby	42
31 May ³	'Crendon' church	?	85
1 June	Lyddington church	Bishop + Thomas Colstone, John Breton, John Malyns, John Bugg	5-6
1 June	Lyddington church	John Leek	79, 80,90
15 June	Registry at Old Temple	John Derby	2
5 July	Registry at Old Temple	John Derby	87
6 July	Registry at Old Temple	John Derby	87
8 July	Registry at Old Temple	John Derby	6

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1. The year is not entirely certain.
 2. Although this is recorded as 14 Feb 1446, and would therefore normally be assigned to 1447, it would seem to fit better with the known movements of the bishop in 1446 (See also *Eng. Clergy*, p 234, n.2).
 3. May be 1436 but not 1449 (as *Eng. Clergy*, p 239).

18 July	Lincoln cathedral	John Tylney	421 ¹
15 July	Wooburn church	Bishop + John Breton, John Bevves, Thomas Holden, Gregory Byrkes, Robert Offord, Thomas Colstone	6
18 July	Wooburn church	Bishop + John Breton, John Bevves, Thomas Holden, Thomas Colstone	87
30 July	Lyddington church	Bishop + John Breton, Thomas Thorpe, Thomas Colstone	6
11 Sept.	Buckden church	John Derby + John Bugg, Thomas Colstone, John Malyns	9
15 Sept.	Buckden church	John Derby + Thomas Colstone, vicar of Buckden, John Bugg, others	6
16 Sept.	Buckden church	Bishop	7
21 Sept.	Buckden church	John Leek ²	7
22 Sept.	Buckden church	John Leek + John Bugg, Thomas Thorpe, Thomas Colstone, Thomas Perkyn	22
26 Sept.	Buckden church	?	26
1 Oct.	Buckden church	John Derby + Robert Fenton vicar of Buckden, Mr. Walter Roch, Robert Derby, John Malyns, John Bugg	1
11 Oct.	Buckden church	John Derby + Mr. John Sutton, Thomas Colstone, Thomas Lowe, John Bugg, vicar of Buckden	11
22 Oct.	Buckden church	John Leek	85, 86
29 Oct.	Eton church	? ³	1
3 Nov.	Buckden church	John Leek	86
4 Nov.	Buckden church	John Leek	3, 12
5 Nov.	Buckden church	John Derby	12
5 Dec.	Lyddington	John Derby	39
13 Dec.	Lyddington church	John Derby	10
13 Dec.	Registry at Lyddington	John Derby	86
14 Dec.	Lyddington church	John Derby	10, 12 85

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1. A compurgation on the instructions of John Derby.
 2. Leek acting as commissary in compurgation.
 3. Leek certifies about suspect's movements to ?bishop.

9 Jan.	Sleaford church	John Derby	81
10 Jan.	Sleaford church	John Derby	81
17 Jan.	Sleaford church	John Derby + Thomas Balscot, John Bugg	95-6
20 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	96
24 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	82, 93
26 Jan.	Registry at Sleaford	Thomas Balscot	96
31 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + Thomas Colstone, Thomas Kyngston, John Bugg	44, 98
4 Feb.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + John Malyns	82, 93, 98
11 Feb.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	82, 98
14 Feb.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	98 ¹
18 Feb.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	93
23 Feb.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby + Henry Py, William Sweten, priests, John Nutt, others	93 93
27 Feb.	Nettleham church	John Derby	93
1 Mar.	St Margaret's church within close at Lincoln	John Derby	93
2 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby + John Smeton, John Tylney, etc.	45, 94, 96
8 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot + 'Perche', John Scot, John Bugg	93
14 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	John Tylney ²	45
14 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	45
14 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	48
21 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	41
23 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	93
26 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	25
28 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	47-8, 82
29 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	93
18 April ?		Thomas Balscot	93
3 May	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	41
21 May	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	3
1 June	Lyddington church	Bishop + Thomas Colstone, John Malyns, John Bugg, many others	90

1. See also p 402, note 2.

2. Auditor of causes for the dean and chapter.

1447 ctd.

9 June	Lyddington church [sic]	Thomas Balscot	98
9 June	Sleaford church [sic]	Thomas Balscot + rector of Ingoldsby, John Bower, vicar of Sleaford, Thomas Colstone	94
28 June	Registry at Lyddington	Thomas Balscot + John Bevves, John Malyns	79
17 Sept.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	37
19 Sept.	Buckden church	John Derby	12-16
19 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot ¹ Mr. William Spalding, John Meriell, John Bugg, others	47
20 Sept.	Chapel in Buckden manor	Bishop + Mr. Michael Amice of Roman curia, John Breton, Thomas Thorpe, John Malyns, John Bugg	17
20 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot + John Bagot, Thomas Thorpe, John Bugg	17
20 Sept.	Buckden church	John Derby	13
23 Sept.	Chapel in Buckden manor	Bishop + John Derby, Gregory Byrkes, many others	17
9 Oct.	Chapel in Buckden manor	Bishop	18
9 Oct.	Buckden church	John Derby	18
14 Oct.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	37
18 Oct.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	18
19 Oct.	Thomas Balscot's chamber	Thomas Balscot	13
20 Oct.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	95
26 Oct.	Buckden church	Bishop + Richard Graunt, rector of Barnwell All Saints, Thomas Balscot, John Leek, Mr. John Butterwick, John Malyns, John Bugg	13, 20
27 Oct.	Buckden church	Bishop + Thomas Balscot, John Stonham gent., John Malyns, John Bugg, others	20
27 Oct.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	88
4 Nov.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	12
10 Nov.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	22
10 Nov.	Lyddington church	John Derby + Thomas Colstone, John Malyns	92

1. Acting in instance case of broken faith, where plaintiff was John Derby who had presided over fifteen cases that day.

1447 ctd.

13 Nov.	Buckden church	Bishop +	20
		Thomas Balscot	
16 Nov.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	13,
			19, 40
20 Nov.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	18
21 Nov.	Hall in Buckden manor	Bishop	21
23 Nov.	Lyddington church	John Derby	3, 7,
			19
2 Dec.	Lyddington church	John Derby	13
11 Dec.	Registry at Lyddington	John Derby	13, 22

1448

3 Jan.	Hall in Sleaford castle	Bishop +	22
		Thomas Balscot, John Derby	
8 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	23
9 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot +	97
		Thomas Thorpe, vicar of Sleaford, Thomas Colstone	
19 Feb.	Registry at Nettleham	?	84
26 Feb.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby +	25
		Mr. John Elvedon, Nicholas Baron, John Bugg	
15 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot +	24-5
		John Clare, William Capell, Thomas Thorpe, scribe	
16 Mar.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	24
29 Mar.	St. Katherine's chapel in Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot +	23
		John Tylney, 'Haytfeld', 'Pedewardyn', Henry Key, Thomas Colstone	
2 April	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	92
24 May	Sleaford	?	82
13 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	40, 99
19 Sept.	Buckden church	John Derby +	3, 23,
		Thomas Balscot, Thomas Colstone, John Bugg	24,
			26, 28
19 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	31
20 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	32
23 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	23,
			26, 40
24 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot +	41, 99
		Mr. William Alnewyk, vicar of Buckden, John Bugg	
25 Sept.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot +	21
		John Derby, Robert Stonham, John Malyns, John Bugg, others	

1448 ctd.

21 Oct.	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	83
22 Oct.	?	John Derby	23
23 Oct.	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	23,32
11 Dec.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	41
13 Dec.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	13
16 Dec.	Sleaford	Thomas Balscot	49-50
16 Dec.	Chapel in Sleaford castle	Bishop + Thomas Balscot, John Derby	52
16 Dec.	Registry at Sleaford	Thomas Balscot & John Derby	52
20 Dec.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	51,57

1449

8 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + John Leek, Thomas Thorpe, John Walbrond, Thomas Colstone	33, 49, 53, 105
9 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	41
10 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + Thomas Thorpe, John Walbrond, Thomas Colstone	50
10 Jan.	Registry at Sleaford	Thomas Balscot + John Walbrond, John and Thomas Colstone	51
11 Jan.	Registry at Sleaford	[Thomas Balscot] + John Walbrond, John and Thomas Colstone	51
13 Jan.	Registry at Sleaford & Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + John Walbrond, John and Thomas Colstone	51-3
14 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + John Walbrond, John and Thomas Colstone	53
15 Jan.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + John Walbrond, John Colstone	54
17 Jan.	Wooburn church	Bishop	105
4 Feb.	Registry at Sleaford	Thomas Balscot + 'Perch', John Bugg, John Walbrond, John and Thomas Colstone	51,53
5 Feb.	Sleaford church	John Derby + John Bower, vicar of Sleaford, John Walbrond, John Bugg	33
5 Feb.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	49,57
5 Feb.	Registry at Sleaford	John Derby	56
6 Feb.	?	Thomas Balscot	41,54
8 Feb.	Registry at Sleaford	Thomas Balscot	52

1. Name illegible but probably Balscot.

11 Feb.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot + John Walbrond, vicar of Sleaford, rector of Ropsley, ('me') Colstone	56
12 Feb.	Sleaford church	Thomas Balscot	56
12 Feb.	Chapel in Sleaford castle	Bishop + Thomas Balscot, Thomas Holden, ('me') John Malyns	100
13 Feb.	Chapel in Sleaford castle	Bishop + as 12 Feb	101
22 Feb.	Chapel in Nettleham manor	Bishop + Thomas Balscot, John Bugg, Thomas Holden, ('me') John Malyns	101
25 Feb.	Sleaford	?	57
?27 Feb	Chapel in Nettleham manor	Bishop	102
28 Feb.	Lincoln cathedral	John Tylney	52
6 Mar.	Buckden church	Thomas Balscot	58
8 Mar.	Church of Huntingon Augustinian Priory	Thomas Balscot	52
18 Mar.	Chapel at Old Temple	Thomas Balscot	103
4 April	?Lincoln cathedral	Robert Thornton and John Tylney ²	52
11 April	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	52
11 April	St Mary's church within Lincoln cathedral close	Thomas Balscot	52
12 April	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	58
21 April	Lincoln cathedral	Thomas Balscot	52, 58
21 April	Lincoln cathedral	John Derby	34
22 April	Registry at Lincoln	John Derby	60
4 July	Chapel at Old Temple	Mr. Richard Dykolun + Thomas Holden, Robert Clyppesby, John Rous, clerk Thomas Colstone	36
11 July	Chapel at Old Temple	Mr. Richard Dykolun + Robert Percy, Gregory Byrkes, Henry Lumby, John Walbrond, Thomas Colstone	36
16 July	Hall at Old Temple	Bishop + [illegible], Thomas Colstone	78x9 ^a
18 July	?	Richard Dykolun + John Bevves	36

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1. This may be 1448 as it is recorded as Monday 12 February 1448. 12 February was a Monday in 1448, a Wednesday in 1449 (HBD, pp 88, 128) The bishop appears to have been in Sleaford in February of both years.
 2. Acting as special commissaries.
 3. Slip found between pages cited.

1449 ctd

25 Aug.	Lyddington church	John Derby	60
6?7 Sept.	Hall in Wooburn manor	Bishop	108
15 Sept.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	107
23 Sept.	Lyddington	?	54
24 Sept.	Lyddington church	John Derby + Hugh Wellys, John Bugg	63
29 Sept.	Lyddington	?	62
10 Oct.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot + 'Perche', Edward Fyssh, John Bugg	60
13 Oct.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot	38
16 Oct.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot + John Baxter, vicar of Lyddington, Edward Fyssh, John Bugg	60
22 Oct.	Lyddington	Bishop + Walter ?Dewery, Thomas Key John Bugg	64
31 Oct.	Lyddington church	John Bevves	30
1 Nov.	Registry at Lyddington	Thomas Balscot	15
4 Nov.	Lyddington church	Thomas Balscot + vicar of Lyddington, rector of Casterton, William Thomlyn, Richard Organer, John Bugg, others	60
26 Nov.	Registry at Old Temple	Thomas Balscot	66
3 Dec.	London	Bishop	76 ¹

William Alnwick died on 5 December 1449

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1. A note that, on 3 December 1449, the bishop '*tolleravit dominum Robertum Dolyth vicarium de Aldenham de non residendo per annum*'.

APPENDIX VII. THE ITINERARY OF WILLIAM ALNWICK, 1411-1449

The following list notes all the known movements of William Alnwick throughout his career. It adds to the itineraries compiled by Hamilton Thompson.¹ All available sources have been used, except for his appearance as a witness of royal charters.² For the period 1422-32, dating clauses of privy seal letters have been used although this source has not been exhaustively exploited.

Only one reference is given for each day although more are often available. Although London and Westminster are mentioned separately, there is no differentiation between locations within them, except for the citation of Charing Cross and Old Temple when the bishop is known to have been at the episcopal manor. Until his resignation of the privy seal, Alnwick's London residence was almost invariably St James's hospital, Westminster. Thereafter, until his translation to Lincoln, he used the episcopal palace at Charing Cross. Where the modern name of a place is unidentifiable, locations suggested by Hamilton Thompson have been added in square brackets after quoting what is set out in the record.

N.B. The addition of a footnote for every date would make the appendix prohibitively long. Therefore references have been appended either when the source changes or, when a variety of sources provide information of a stay in one place, when the location changes. Notes of the date and places of parliament (1422-49) and the convocation of the clergy of the Canterbury province (1420-49) have also been added.³

See Maps 1, 2 and 3 for some of the major locations mentioned.

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1. *Visitations* II, pp xxxi-xliii (Lincoln), 409-13 (Norwich). In the latter, he seems to have confused the bishop's acts with those of the vicar general. For example, on 11 October 1428 it was Bernham who acted at Ipswich (Norw. Reg., f 28) not Alnwick (*Visitations* II, p 409).
 2. See above, p 314 for the difficulties of this source; and Appendix IX for Alnwick's reported presence as witness.
 3. All dates have been taken from *HBC*, pp 568-9, 600-602.

ITINERARY

1411

<u>Month</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Place</u>
July	28	Middleham castle ¹

1415

December	21	Downham (bp of Ely's manor) ²
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1416

March	14	London (St. Paul's) ³
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1417

February	27	Cambridge ⁴
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1418

May	21	Downham ⁵
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1420

July	7	France
December	5	France ⁶

1421

January	5	France ⁷
April	15	Lincoln ⁸
May	6	Lambeth ⁹
	7	Westminster ¹⁰

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1. *Register of Thomas Langley*, vol. I, pp 160-1.
 2. CUL: Ely diocesan records: G 1/3 (Register of Bishop Fordham, 1388-1425), f 265.
 3. Guildhall Library: Ms. 9531/4, f 76.
 4. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. II, p 118.
 5. CUL: Ely: G 1/3, f 269v.
 6. 'Calendar of Norman Rolls: Henry V', pp 375, 393.
 7. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part III, pp 197-9.
 8. *CPR*, 1416-22, pp 404-6.
 9. *PPC*, vol. II, pp 315. Convocation was at St Paul's from 5 - 27 May 1421.
 10. Benedictine chapter (PRO: E 135/1/2).

1422

August	31	Paris (Bois de Vincennes) ¹
December	20, 21	London ²

1423

January	14-17, 20-1, 26	London & Westminster ³
February	1, 5, 6, 8, 10-12, 15, 17-19, 21-2, 24, 27-8	London & Westminster ⁴
March	1-7, 21, 23	London, Westminster, Greenwich ⁵
April	10	Westminster ⁶
May	7, 14, 21-2, 30	London & Westminster ⁷
June	5, 9-18, 20, 22, 25, 27-8, 30	London & Westminster ⁸
July	10, 12, 18	Westminster ⁹
October	18, 23, 27-8	Westminster ¹⁰
November	3, 7, 8, 14-18, 20, 22-6, 28-9	Westminster ¹¹
December	9, 15, 18	Westminster ¹²

1424

January	14, 16, 18-20, 22, 24-5, 28, 31	Westminster ¹³
February	1, 3-9, 11-16, 18-22, 25-8	Westminster & London ¹⁴
March	28-9	Durham ¹⁵
May	15	Westminster ¹⁶
June	8	Westminster ¹⁷
July	1-6, 8, 12, 15, 20	Westminster ¹⁸
October	14, 18	London & Westminster ¹⁹

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1. PPC, vol. III, p 3.
 2. *Ibid.*, pp 11-12. Parliament was at Westminster from 9 November until 18 December 1422.
 3. PPC, Vol. III, pp 18-22.
 4. *Ibid.*, pp 23-45; PRO: E 28/39.
 5. PPC, vol. III, 46-66; PRO: E28/39.
 6. PRO: E28/40.
 7. PPC, vol. III, pp 73-6, 99-100; PRO: E 28/41; E 404/39/291.
 8. PPC, vol. III, pp 105-9; PRO: C 81/1544/39; E 28/42.
 9. PPC, vol. III, pp 113-6; PRO: E 404/39/342.
 10. PPC, vol. III, pp 117-8; PRO: C 81/1544/42; E 28/43. Parliament was at Westminster from 20 October 1423 until 28 February 1424.
 11. PPC, vol. III, pp 120-8; PRO: E 28/43; C 81/1544/44-45.
 12. PPC, vol. III, p 130; PRO: C 81/1544/46; E 404/40/140.
 13. PPC, vol. III, pp 131-2; PRO: C 81/1544/49; E 28/43.
 14. PPC, vol. III, pp 135-43; PRO: C81/1544/50-56; E 28/44.
 15. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, pp 109-12; CCR, 1422-9, p 143 (on embassy).
 16. CCR, 1422-9, p 143.
 17. PPC, vol. III, pp 147.
 18. PPC, vol. III, pp 148-54; PRO: C 81/1544/59; E 28/45; E 404/40/218.
 19. CPR, 1422-9, pp 337-9; *Reg.Chich.*, vol. III, p 91. Convocation was at St Paul's from 12 - 26 October 1424.

1424 (ctd)

November	12-13, 16-18	Westminster ¹
December	1, 8	Westminster ²

1425

February	15, 23-6	Westminster ³
March	3	London ⁴
May	14, 16, 22, 26	Westminster ⁵
July	20	Westminster ⁶
August	23	Warkworth ⁷

1426

January	29	St Albans ⁸
February	18	Leicester ⁹
March	12, 14, 15	Leicester ¹⁰
May	4, 28	Leicester ¹¹
June	28	Westminster ¹²
July	1, 14, 22, 25-6	London & Westminster ¹³
August	18-19	Canterbury ¹⁴
	22	Westminster ¹⁵
September	4	Westminster ¹⁶
October	15, 18, 20, 22, 25, 31,	Westminster
November	1, 6, 9	Westminster ¹⁷
	20, 26	Reading ¹⁸
December	6-8, 10, 13	Westminster ¹⁹

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1. PRO: C 81/1544/60-61; E 28/46.
 2. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 158-64.
 3. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 165-6; PRO: C 81/1544/62. Convocation was at St Paul's from 27 January until 17 February 1425.
 4. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 167-7.
 5. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 168-9; *RP*, vol. IV, p 262; PRO: E 28/46. Parliament was at Westminster from 30 April until 14 July 1425. Convocation was at St Paul's from 23 April until 18 July 1425.
 6. *CPR*, 1422-9, pp 339-40.
 7. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 171-4 (on embassy to the Scots).
 8. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 181-7.
 9. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 299-300. Parliament was at Leicester from 18 February until 1 June 1426.
 10. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 190, 265-7; vol. VI, pp 347-9. Convocation was at St Paul's from 15 - 27 April 1426.
 11. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 121; PRO: E 28/47.
 12. PRO: E 28/47.
 13. Norw. Reg., f 97v; *PPC*, vol. III, pp 199-206; PRO: E 28/47.
 14. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, p 93; Norw. Reg., ff 17-19.
 15. Norw. Reg., f 19.
 16. PRO: E 28/48.
 17. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 209-10; *CCR*, 1422-9, p 277; PRO: E 28/48; Norw. Reg., ff 21, 91, 97v.
 18. PRO: E 28/48; Norw. Reg., f 22.
 19. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 225-6; PRO: E 28/48.

1427

January	25, 28	Westminster ¹
February	1, 4, 6, 18, 20, 24-6, 28	London & Westminster ²
March	8, 10, 13	Canterbury ³
April	17	Cottenham (?Cambs.) ⁴
May	6, 9, 12, 16, 19, 24, 26	London & Westminster ⁵
May-July		Burgundy ⁶
September	14	Terling ⁷
October	8	Terling ⁸
	24-5	Westminster ⁹
November	11, 25	London & Westminster ¹⁰
December	4, 8	Charing Cross, Westminster ¹¹
	20	Thetford
	22, 24-5, 27	Norwich

1428

January	1-4	Norwich
	13	Little Walsingham
	18	Bishop's Lynn
	29	London ¹²
February	1, 4, 6-8, 10-12, 14, 21-2, 25-8	Westminster, Charing Cross ¹³
March	3, 5, 6, 8, 12, 16-17, 19, 20, 22, 24	Westminster ¹⁴
May	4, 11, 14	London & Westminster ¹⁵
June	1, 13, 15, 27	Westminster ¹⁶
July	4, 7-9, 11, 16, 20	London and Westminster ¹⁷
August	16-17	Norwich

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1. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 229-37.
 2. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 242-3, 250-1; *PRO*: E 28/49; *Norw. Reg.*, ff 24, 91, 97.
 3. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 252-5; *PRO*: E 28/49.
 4. *Norw. Reg.*, f 92. *Visitations II*, p 409 incorrectly assigns this date to 1428; Easter Day was 20 April.
 5. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 268-9; *PRO*: C 81/1544/63, 69, 70; E 404/43/305, 334.
 6. *CPR*, 1422-9, p 414; *PRO*: E 403/680.
 7. *Norw. Reg.*, f 97v.
 8. *Ibid.*, f 8.
 9. *Ibid.*, ff 91v, 97v. Parliament was at Westminster from 13 October 1427 until 25 March 1428.
 10. *Register Thomas Langley*, vol. III, pp 56-7; *PRO*: E 404/44/163.
 11. *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 132; *Norw. Reg.*, f 97v.
 12. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 9-10, 91v-92, 121.
 13. *Ibid.*, ff 11v, 12v, 91v-2; *PPC*, vol. III, pp 282-9; *Foedera*, vol. IV, part IV, p 133; *PRO*: E 48/50.
 14. *RP*, vol. IV, p 327; *Foedera* vol. IV part IV, p 134; *PPC*, vol. III, pp 290-3; *PRO*: E 28/50. Easter Day was 14 April.
 15. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 91v-92; *PRO*: E 28/50; E 403/686, m 4.
 16. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 296-9; *RP*, IV, 334; *PRO*: C 81/1545/4; E 28/50.
 17. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 302, 312; *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 185, 189; *Norw. Reg.*, f 99; *PRO*: E 28/50. Convocation at St Paul's from 5 - 21 July 1428.

1428 (ctd)

September	2	Norwich ¹
	3	Terling
	5	Lavenham ²
	9, 13, 18, 22, 24, 27	Norwich ³
October	5, 7, 8	Norwich ⁴
October	18, 26	Westminster ⁵
November	11-12, 15, 17	London & Westminster
December	2	London ⁶
	14-15	Bury St Edmunds
	18	Lavenham ⁷

1429

January	16	London ⁸
February	1, 16, 18	Westminster
	22	Thorpe ⁹
March	1, 12-13, 15-18, 21-3, 26, 28, 31	Thorpe & Norwich ¹⁰
April	1	Norwich ¹¹
	17-18, 20, 27	Westminster ¹²
May	3, 9, 10, 12, 22	London & Westminster ¹³
June	12, 15, 17-19, 23	Westminster ¹⁴
July	14, 18	Westminster
	23	Terling
August	11, 20, 27, 30	Thorpe & Norwich ¹⁵
September	2	Thorpe & Norwich
	16	Bromehill Priory
	19	Newmarket ¹⁶
October	1, 18-19, 25	London, Westminster ¹⁷
November	20, 29	Westminster
December	3, 4, 6, 8, 14-16, 20	London & Westminster

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1. *Trials*, p 32; Norw. Reg., f 16
 2. Norw. Reg. ff 16, 108v, 109v.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 16v, 28, 123v; *FZ*, p 417.
 4. *Trials*, pp 38, 41; Foxe, vol. III, p 593.
 5. NRO: EST 15/1/1; PRO: E 403/688.
 6. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. I, p xlvi; vol. III, pp 191, 196. Convocation was at St Paul's from 12 November until 7 December 1428.
 7. Norw. Reg., ff 29, 92, 108-109v, 124.
 8. Norw. Reg., ff 99v-100.
 9. *Ibid.*, ff 30v, 31; NRO: EST 15/1/1; PRO: E 403/688.
 10. Norw. Reg., ff 31, 125v-6. Easter Day was 27 March.
 11. *Trials*, pp 43, 51-70.
 12. *PPC*, vol. III, p 323; Norw. Reg., f 92.
 13. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 324-6; Norw. Reg. ff 92-3; PRO: C 85/137; E 404/ 45/136.
 14. *PPC*, vol. III, pp 328-30; Norw. Reg., f 92v; PRO: C 84/43/37; E 28/50.
 15. *Trials*, pp 79-84; Norw. Reg., ff 34v, 92v-3, 100.
 16. Norw. Reg., ff 34v-5; NRO: DCN 40/2/R235c. Parliament was at Westminster from 22 September 1429 until 23 February 1430.
 17. Convocation at St Paul's from 19 October - 20 December 1429.

January	6-8, 11-13, 15-16, 18, 24, 28	Westminster
February	4, 7, 8, 10-13, 16, 18, 20, 23, 25	Westminster ¹
March	1	Westminster & Thorpe [sic] ²
	2-4, 7-11	Thorpe & Norwich ³
	15	West Acre Priory ⁴
	17-8, 20, 22, 24, 30	Thornage ⁵
April	1	Walsingham Priory
	6, 8	Thorpe ⁶
	11, 12, 15	Norwich ⁷
	[16	Canterbury] ⁸
	18	Norwich ⁹
	20	Bury St Edmunds ¹⁰
May	4, 15-17, 19, 20, 23-4, 26-7	Westminster
June	12, 18, 20, 22, 24-9	Westminster
July	1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10-13, 16, 18,	Westminster ¹¹
	20, 23	
August	3-7, 17, 19, 21	Norwich ¹²
	23	Hoxne ¹³
September	2, 13	Westminster ¹⁴
	16, 20, 22-3	Norwich ¹⁵
	26, 27	Hoxne
October	3, 4	Hoxne
	25	Westminster ¹⁶
November	6	Westminster
December	9	Westminster ¹⁷
	31	Terling ¹⁸

January	22	Norwich
	23, 27, 29	Westminster

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 210, 212; *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 5-6, 8, 15-6; PRO: C 81/1545/10-11; E 28/51; Norw. Reg., ff 38, 93v-4.
 2. PRO: E 28/51; Norw. Reg., f 38v.
 3. *Trials*, pp 92-105; Norw. Reg., ff 38v-9; 128.
 4. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 87.
 5. *Ibid.*, f 88v; Norw. Reg., f 39.
 6. Norw. Reg., ff 39v, 128v. Folio 94 records presence at St James's hospital, Westminster on 8 March.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 39v, 129.
 8. Easter Day: consecration of Lumley (Borthwick Institute Reg. 19 (John Kemp), f 17) and PS letters (*PPC*, vol. IV, p 35).
 9. *Trials*, pp 107, 114, 119, 125, 130, 133
 10. *Trials*, p 100.
 11. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 45-56; PRO: C 81/1545/14; E 28/52; Norw. Reg., ff 41, 94.
 12. *Trials*, pp 138-77; Norw. Reg., f 41v.
 13. Norw. Reg., ff 41v, 100v-2v.
 14. *Ibid.*, f 41v; *PPC*, vol. IV, p 67.
 15. *Trials*, pp 181-9; Norw. Reg., ff 42, 101-2v, 130.
 16. Norw. Reg., ff 42, 94, 101-2v, 130.
 17. PRO: E 28/53.
 18. Norw. Reg., ff 94v-5.

1431 (ctd)

February	7	Westminster ¹
March	8, 15-17	Westminster ²
	26-7, 31	Thorpe and Norwich
April	4, 6-7, 10	Thorpe and Norwich
	18	Charing Cross
	24	Norwich ³
	28	Westminster
May	1	Westminster ⁴
	24	Rouen ⁵
May 1431 - February 1432		France

1432

February	18, 23, 25	Charing Cross, Westminster ⁶
March	15, 18, 21, 23, 26, 28	Norwich and Thorpe ⁷
April	3	Hickling Priory
	5, 10-13, 19, 24, 26, 29	Norwich and Thorpe
May	1	Kersey Priory
	5	St Gregory's College, Sudbury
	8	Stoke by Clare
	18, 21, 23-4, 27	Charing Cross
June	11	Charing Cross
	13-14	St Gregory's College, Sudbury
	26	Charing Cross
July	22, 24	Hoxne
	24	Bungay
	30-1	Blythburgh Priory
August	1	Snape
	8	Wickham Market
	11	Holy Trinity Priory Ipswich
	18	Great Bricett Priory
	21	Hoxne
September	5	Hoxne
	11	Terling
	14	'Herne, London diocese' ⁸

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1. Norw. Reg., ff 44-95 (7 February is the last entry in the register dated at St James's Hospital). Parliament was at Westminster from 12 January - 20 March (date of financial grant); Convocation at St Paul's from 19 February - 21 March.
 2. PPC, vol. IV, pp 79-80; PRO: E 403/696; E 404/47; E 28/53.
 3. Norw. Reg., ff 45, 95v, 102v, 110, 131-2. Easter Day was 1 April.
 4. PPC, vol. IV, pp 38-9, 85.
 5. Tisset, *Procès*, vol. I, p 385.
 6. PPC, vol. IV, pp 349-50; Norw. Reg., f 95.
 7. Norw. Reg., ff 53v-4, 134; BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 85.
 8. Norw. Reg., ff 54-56v, 103, 135-v. Parliament was at Westminster from 12 May until 17 July 1432. Easter Day was 20 April.

1432 (ctd)

September	15-17	London and Charing Cross ¹
October	5-9	Norwich and Thorpe
	13-14	Holy Trinity Priory Ipswich
	17-18, 20, 23, 25, 27-8, 31	Norwich and Thorpe
November	3	'Ocle' [Acle?]
	4	Yarmouth
	5	St Benet at Hulme Abbey
	10	Ingham Priory
	12	Cawston
	20?	Walsingham Priory
	20	Norwich
	22-3	Fakenham
December	5, 9	Bishop's Lynn
	9	West Dereham
	17	East Dereham
	18	Charing Cross [sic]
	20, 23	Norwich ²

1433

January	5	Norwich
	16	Loddon
	21	St Faith's Priory, Horsham
	28, 30	Thorpe
February	3, 4	Thorpe
	6	'Badburgham'
		[Babraham, Cambs.]
	7	Barkway
	10, 12	Charing Cross
	18	Bury St Edmunds
	23-5	Thorpe and Norwich
	28	Thornage
March	2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 17-19, 23, 28, 31	Thornage
April	2, 4	Thornage
	6, 7, 10-12, 16, 18	Thorpe and Norwich
	18	Butley Priory
	20, 21, 28	Thorpe and Norwich ³
May	1	Norwich ⁴
	11	Holy Trinity Priory, Ipswich
	12, 15, 20, 22-4, 30	Hoxne
June	1, 2	Hoxne
	5, 6, 8	Norwich
	19, 20, 23, 25, 27, 29	Hoxne
July	3	Terling ⁵

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1. *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 230; *Norw. Reg.*, f 56v; PRO: C 81/1545/38. Convocation at St Paul's on 15 - 24 September 1432.
 2. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 57-9, 107, 111-111v, 136v.
 3. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 59-61v, 107v-8, 137-8. Easter Day was 12 April.
 4. Hudson and Tingey, *Norwich City Records*, vol. II, p lxxxiv.
 5. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 61v-64v, 96, 103, 116, 138v. Parliament was at Westminster from 8 July (date of termination unknown).

1433 (ctd)

July	15, 17-18, 22, 30	Charing Cross ¹
August	5, 14	Charing Cross
	18	Terling
	26	Hoxne
September	3, 6, 9, 12	Hoxne
	15, 18-19, 22-5, 29	Norwich
October	3, 6	Thorpe and Norwich
	10, 12	Hoxne
	13	Bury St Edmunds
	20	Norwich ²
November	1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 13, 14, 19-23	Charing Cross, London and Westminster ³
December	1, 5, 10-11, 14	London ⁴
	19	Babwell Friary by Bury St Edmunds
	23, 24	Bury St Edmunds ⁵

1434

January	6, 7	Bury St Edmunds
	25	Hoxne
February	5-7, 9, 11, 17	Bury St Edmunds
	18	Bungay
	20, 23	Norwich and Thorpe
March	4, 5, 10, 11	Thorpe
	13	Norwich
	22	Fornham St Martins
	22, 24	Bury St Edmunds
April	19, 24, 26, 29	Charing Cross ⁶
May	3, 7, 8, 11	Charing Cross and London ⁷
	30	Terling
June	2	Norwich
July	15, 17, 20-1, 30	Norwich and Thorpe
August	5, 8, 13, 16-17, 20, 23	Hoxne
September	10, 18-19, 30	Hoxne
October	1	Hoxne ⁸
	7, 8, 10, 14, 18, 20	London and Charing Cross ⁹
	30	Norwich

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1. Norw. Reg., ff 63, 111; PRO: C 85/137/37.
 2. Norw. Reg., ff 57v, 63-5, 111v, 139.
 3. Convocation was at St Paul's from 7 November - 21 December 1433.
 4. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 422, 458-9; *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 242, 245, 247-51; *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 183-4; Norw. Reg., ff 65-6, 112.
 5. Norw. Reg., ff 66, 139v; BL: Add. Ms. 14848, f 110.
 6. Norw. Reg., 66-8v, 140. Easter Day was 28 March.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 68v-9; *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 210-3.
 8. Norw. Reg., ff 70-2, 96v, 115, 141v.
 9. *Ibid.*, ff 72, 114; *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 253. Convocation was at St Paul's from 7 - 23 October 1434.

1434 (ctd)

November	2, 3	Norwich
November	5, 12	Cirencester ¹

1435

January	25, 27-8	Hoxne ²
February	9, 10, 14, 20, 23, 25, 26, 28	Thorpe and Norwich ³
March	2, 4, 7, 12, 14-15, 17, 23, 25, 29	Thorpe and Norwich
April	1	Charing Cross [sic]
	2, 12, 22	Norwich ⁴
	[11, 14, 15]	Gloucester?
May	29	Westminster ⁵
	31	Norwich
June	11, 14-16, 19, 29	Norwich
July	5	Charing Cross ⁶

9 July to 17 September on embassy to Arras⁷

October	1	Kennington ⁸
	24, 30	Charing Cross ⁹
November	9, 11, 22, 25	Charing Cross
December	3, 6	Charing Cross ¹⁰
	30	Norwich

1436

January	5, 8, 14-15, 22, 24-5	Norwich and Thorpe ¹¹
February	4, 12, 14	Charing Cross ¹²
	24	Ipswich
	26	Hoxne
	29	Norwich

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1. *PPC*, vol. IV, pp 287-8; *Norw. Reg.*, ff 72v-4v (also records him at Norwich on November 8 - 10; Norwich dates are impersonal)
 2. *Norw. Reg.*, f 74.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 74-5; PRO: C 85/137/38.
 4. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 75-6, 142v. Easter Day was 17 April.
 5. PRO: E 28/55 (Records for 11, 14, 15 April seem to indicate he delivered Bishop Bouchier's temporalities to him in Gloucester).
 6. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 76v-8v, 143.
 7. PRO: E 364/69 rot 3. *Norw. Reg.* records him at Norwich on 13, 14 July and 9, 10, 12 August (ff 77v-9).
 8. PRO: C 81/1545/55. Parliament was at Westminster from 10 October until 23 December 1434 (date of financial grant).
 9. *Norw. Reg.*, f 80; PRO: C 85/137/39 (*Norw. Reg.*, f 79v has entries for Norwich on 26 October and 5 November - probably vicar general).
 10. *Norw. Reg.*, f 80; PRO: C 85/137/40. Convocation was at St Paul's from 12 November until 23 December.
 11. *Norw. Reg.*, ff 81, 103v.
 12. BL: Add. Ms. 14848, ff 193v, 303v; PRO: C 85/137/41.

1436 (ctd)

March	1-3 8 10, 17, 19, 21-2, 24 26-7, 31	Norwich Bishop's Lynn Thornage Norwich
April	24, 28	Norwich ¹
May	8	Westminster ²
June	2-5, 8, 11, 14 22, 25	Norwich Hoxne ³
July	4 [17, 19, 22, 25, 27 24-6	Westminster Norwich Canterbury ⁴
August	7, 8 12-14, 16-17, 21	Norwich Hoxne
September	6 22 22, 24, 26 25	Norwich Thornage Norwich Thorpe ⁵
October	1-4 12 15, 21, 25-7, 29	Norwich ⁶ Hoxne ⁷ Westminster ⁸
November	6 10, 13-16, 27	Kennington Charing Cross, Westminster ⁹
December	12, 14 20 [12, 21 23	Hoxne Norwich ¹⁰ Lincoln London ¹¹

1437

January	2, 14-15, 20, 22 21	Thorpe and Norwich Ipswich ¹²
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1. Norw. Reg., ff 81v-83v, 144v. Easter Day was 8 April.
 2. Johnson, *Richard of York*, pp 226-7.
 3. Norw. Reg., ff 84-5, 145v.
 4. PRO: E 28/57. The dates at Norwich (Norw. Reg., ff 85v-6) are perhaps acts of the vicar general.
 5. Norw. Reg., ff 86, 116, 117, 146.
 6. Norw. Reg., f 87; Reg. Brouns, f 113.
 7. Norw. Reg., f 87.
 8. PRO: E 28/58; Norw. Reg., ff 87v-88 has 19, 24, 26, 29 October at Norwich, 25th at Hoxne - probably vicar general. Linc. Reg., f 146, has Lincoln and Lambeth on 8 and 29 October. Lambeth is possible but Lincoln unlikely.
 9. PRO: C 81/1545/61-2; E 28/58; Norw. Reg., f 89. Lambeth on 7th is probably right (Linc. Reg., f 146v), not Norwich on 8th or 9th (Norw. Reg., f 88v).
 10. Norw. Reg., f 89. Norwich was very probably the vicar general.
 11. Linc. Reg., ff 28, 146v. Lincoln is unlikely.
 12. Norw. Reg., ff 87-90v. Ipswich is probably the vicar general. Linc. Reg., ff 146v-7, has Lincoln on 17 January, which is unlikely. Parliament was at Westminster from 21 January until 27 March 1437.

January	28	Charing Cross
February	1, 3, 4, 11, 13	Charing Cross ¹
	14, 21	London
March	2, 5, 8, 10, 13-14	London
	15-16	Dunstable
	16, 19, 20, 22	London
	25	Eynsham Abbey
	28	Lincoln
April	17	Oxford
	19	St Leonard's Priory by Stamford
	20	Stamford ²
	29, 30	London ³
May	1	Westminster
	11	Kennington and London ⁴
June	[2, 10, 15, 17, 26, 30	Stamford]
	[24	Lyddington] ⁵
	16	Kennington
	17, 22	Westminster
July	8-12, 15	Kennington ⁶
	[13, 15, 20, 27, 30-1	Stamford] ⁷
	15	London
	30	Lyddington ⁸
August	1, 2	Stamford ⁹
	7	Buckden ¹⁰
	13	Leicester
	14	Daventry
	15	Leicester
	20	Canons Abbey
	23	Buckden
	31	London
September	6, 7	Buckden ¹¹
	12, 21, 26	Sleaford ¹²

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1. Norw. Reg., f 90v.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 28-33, 115, 147. Easter Day was 31 March.
 3. *Ibid.*, f 115v; *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, p 258. Convocation was at St Paul's from 29 April until 8 May 1437.
 4. *PPC*, vol. V, p 22, 25; *LAO*: A 2/32, f 122v. Stamford on 7th and 20th is probably the vicar general, who was there on the 14th (*Linc. Reg.*, ff 29v, 147). It is possible that many of the Stamford dates are the vicar general. The most doubtful items noted below are in square brackets, i.e. [].
 5. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 115-7. Stamford is probably the vicar general; Lyddington may be misdated - see 1438.
 6. *RP*, vol. IV, pp 566-7; *PPC*, vol. V, pp 42-50.
 7. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 31, 116, 147. Probably the vicar general as the 15th definitely is.
 8. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 117v, 147v.
 9. *Linc. Reg.*, f 147v.
 10. *LAO*: A 2/32, f 124.
 11. *Linc. Reg.*, f 115v; *LAO*: A 2/32, f 124.
 12. *Linc. Reg.*, ff 116, 148.

1437 (ctd)

October	1-8	Lincoln ¹
	[11, 21	Stamford] ²
	23	Old Temple, London ³
	21, 24, 30	Sheen
November	5	Sheen ⁴
	7-10, 12, 16, 18-20	London (including Old Temple) & Westminster ⁵
	[17	Stamford] ⁶
	23, 26	Buckden
December	1	Buckden ⁷
	10-11	Peterborough ⁸
	16-18	Buckden
	20-1	Hitchin ⁹

1438

January	8	Stamford
	13, 14-16, 17, 18, 21, 22	Lincoln ¹⁰
	26-7	Bardney Abbey ¹¹
February	3	Lincoln ¹²
	8	Sleaford ¹³
	20	Lyddington
	25	Old Temple, London
	28	Lyddington ¹⁴
March	9	Sleaford ¹⁵
	10	Nettleham ¹⁶
	11, 13-15	Lincoln ¹⁷
	[14	London]
	15	Nettleham ¹⁸
	19	Bardney ¹⁹
	20, 22, 24, 26-8	Lincoln ²⁰

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1. LAO: Vj 2, ff 5-13.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 116v, 163v.
 3. LAO: A 2/32, f 126.
 4. PPC, vol. V, p 64-70; Linc. Reg., f 117.
 5. PPC, vol. V, p 70-80; Linc. Reg., ff 30-2v, 116v-17.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 116, 163v.
 7. BL: Add. Ms. 25288, f 160v; Linc. Reg., 32v, f 163v.
 8. *Visitations* II, pp 269-82.
 9. Linc. Reg., ff 31v-32v, 163v.
 10. Linc. Reg., ff 80, 116v-17; LAO: Vj 2, f 3, 25v.
 11. *Visitations* II, p 8.
 12. Linc. Reg., f 80.
 13. LAO: A 2/32, f 127.
 14. Linc. Reg., ff 117, 163v.
 15. BL: Add. Ms. 25288, f 161v.
 16. Linc. Reg., f 117v.
 17. LAO: Vj 2, ff 3v-4v, 24.
 18. Linc. Reg., ff 116-17v.
 19. *Visitations* II, p 13.
 20. LAO: Vj 2, ff 3v-4v, 24

1438 (ctd)

March	20	Nettleham
	22	Lincoln
	28	Castle Bytham
April	2	Stilton
	2	Peterborough
	12	Old Temple, London ¹
	10, 11, 13	Windsor
	28	London
May	1, 4, 7, 10-14, 17, 22	Old Temple, London ¹
	9, 13, 14	Kennington ²
	23	Old Temple, London ³
	28	Wooburn
June	7	Northampton ⁴
June	12, 13, 16, 17, 20, 24-6, 28	Lyddington
July	2, 20, 24, 29	Lyddington ⁵
	29	Ulverscroft Priory ⁶
August	2	Lyddington
	8	Wingfield
	12	Lyddington and Sleaford ⁷
	17	Lincoln ⁸
	19-20	Markby Priory
	21-2	Spalding Priory
	23, 26	Buckden
	30	Old Temple, London
September	20	Buckden
	23-4	Fotheringhay College ⁹
October	2, 6, 8, 9, 11, 18	Buckden
	25-6, 29	Wooburn
November	13, 16, 17	Old Temple and London
	24, 26, 28-9	Lyddington ¹⁰
December	1, 3, 4, 10, 15, 17, 18	Lyddington

1439

January	3, 7, 8, 26, 29	Lyddington
February	1, 3, 5	Nettleham
	7	Sleaford
	10-12	Lyddington
	13	Sleaford
	14	Lyddington

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 34, 107v-8v, 116v-19, 149, 191. Convocation at St Paul's from 28 April - 14 May 1438. Easter Day was 13 April.
 2. *PPC*, vol. V, p 95-9.
 3. LAO: A 2/32, f 128v.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 118v, 149.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 107, 118-19v; PRO: C 85/112/3.
 6. *Visitations* II, p 385.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 107, 119.
 8. LAO: A 2/32, f 132.
 9. *Visitations* II, pp 92, 227, 328; Linc. Reg., ff 118-20, 143, 149.
 10. Linc. Reg., ff 33-4, 108, 119v, 149v, 187; PRO: C 85/112/4.

1439 (ctd)

February	14	Oundle
	19, 24-5, 27-8	Wooburn ¹
March	[6	Lyddington]
	6, 8, 11, 12	London
	16-18, 23, 27	Lyddington
	30	Sleaford
April	1	Nettleham
	1, 2, 4-6, 8	Lincoln
	9	Sleaford
	13	Buckden ²
	16, 20, 24, 28-9	Old Temple, London and Westminster ³
	[29	Stamford]
May	2-4	Old Temple, London ⁴
	8	Kennington ⁵
	10	London
	17	Buckden
	20	Lyddington
	23, 26-7	Sleaford
June	1, 3	Sleaford ⁶
	8-11, 13, 16, 23, 25	Lincoln and Nettleham ⁷
	28	Sleaford
	29	Lyddington ⁸
July	1, 4, 6	Sleaford ⁹
	9	Lincoln
	10	'Braynford' [Brentford?]
	11	London
	14, 17	Sleaford
	23	Sewardsley Priory
August	7, 9	Sleaford
September	2	Wooburn
	6, 23	Buckden
	24	Sleaford
	26-7	Buckden ¹⁰
	28	St Neot's Priory ¹¹
October	5, 7, 8	Buckden
	15	Huntingdon Priory

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1. Convocation at St Paul's on 28 February 1439.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 80v-81v, 83, 113, 107v-8, 119-20, 122-4, 145, 149-51, 165, 172, 187, 191. Easter Day was 5 April.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 122v-3, 151, 172; PRO: E 28/59.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 107v, 123-4, 151. 4 May was the intended date for the visitation of Ramsey Abbey (BL: Add. Ms. 33450, ff 13-14).
 5. PRO: E 28/60; Linc. Reg., f 151.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 81-2, 123, 151v.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 8-20, 82, 123, 151; LAO: A 2/33, f 9; Vj 2, ff 35-6.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 108, 123v.
 9. *Ibid.*, f 120v; PRO: C 84/45/38.
 10. Linc. Reg., ff 44v, 80, 82, 118, 123-4v, 148, 151v-2, 181.
 11. *Visitations II*, p 320.

1439 (ctd)

October	16, 20-2, 28, 30, 31	Buckden ¹
November	9	Buckden ²
	14, 16, 20, 21, 24-6, 29	Old Temple and London
December	4, 7	Old Temple and London ³
	10	Buckden ⁴
	11, 13, 14	London & Westminster ⁵
	19-22	Buckden
	23	Lyddington

1440

January	3, 9	Lyddington ⁶
	23, 29, 30	Reading
February	6, 8	Reading ⁷
	[4	Nettleham]
	[6	'North' [Northampton?]
	14	Lyddington
	20	Lincoln
	22, 24-5	Nettleham
	[x27	Lyddington]
March	3, 4, 8, 10, 16, 17	Nettleham ⁸
	17	Bardney Abbey ⁹
	19, 20, 22	Nettleham
	25	Windsor
April	1	Nettleham
	3	Lincoln & Cambridge [sic] ¹⁰
	6	Torksey Abbey
	6	Fosse Priory
	7, 8	Heynings Priory ¹¹
	9	Nettleham ¹²
	10	Owston ¹³
	11	Gokewell Priory

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1. *Ibid.*, pp 148, 400; Linc. Reg., ff 44v, 121v-2v, 124, 148v, 181, 191v.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 148v, 165.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 120v, 121-2, 124, 144, 148v, 165, 172, 181; *Reg. Chich.*, vol. III, pp 279, 282. Parliament was at Westminster from 12 November until 21 December; Convocation was at St Paul's from 21 November until 22 December 1439.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 144.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 181, 191v; PRO: E 28/63.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 38, 121v-2, 124, 148v, 150v, 181.
 7. *Ibid.*, ff 37, 121, 150v-1; *Register Edmund Lacy*, vol. I, p 255; Parliament was at Reading from 14 January until 15x24 February 1440.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 34-7, 80v, 82v, 120-2, 124, 148, 151.
 9. *Visitations II*, p 25.
 10. Linc. Reg., ff 36v-7, 83, 85v, 121v-2, 151, 191v. Easter Day was 27 March.
 11. *Ibid.*, ff 83, 125v; *Visitations II*, pp 91, 132, 383.
 12. Linc. Reg., f 165.
 13. PRO: C 85/112/8.

April	12	Thornholme Priory ¹
	16	[Spital-in-the-street]
	16, 17	Nettleham
	18	Lincoln
	21	Lyddington
	24-5	Buckden ²
	26, 28, 30	Old Temple, London ³
	[28	Sleaford]
May	3	Buckden
	4	Old Temple, London
	13	Bedford
	20, 24, 28, 30, 31	Sleaford
June	4, 13	Sleaford ⁴
	16, 17	Bourne Abbey
	18, 19	Crowland Abbey ⁵
	27	Spilsby
July	2	Alford ⁶
	6	Humberstone Abbey
	7	Wellow Abbey
	9, 10	Nun Cotham Priory
	11	Thornton Abbey
	14	Elsham Priory ⁷
	15	East Rasen
	19	Benniworth
	21	Tetford
	22	Horncastle ⁸
	25	Stainfield Priory ⁹
	25, 28	Nettleham ¹⁰
	29	Lincoln ¹¹
	30	Sleaford
August	1, 2	Sleaford
	5	Boston
	8	Sleaford
	17	Lincoln
	18-20, 23	Sleaford
	29	Biggleswade
	31	Old Temple, London ¹²
September	12, 19, 22-3	Sleaford ¹³
	28-9	Nettleham

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1. *Visitations* II, pp 116, 362.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 83, 85v, 125v, 153.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 35, 36v, 83v, 85v; PRO: C 85/112/7.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 35-7v, 83v, 85v, 126, 153, 181v-2.
 5. *Visitations* II, pp 35, 54.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 125v-6, 152, 181v.
 7. *Visitations* II, pp 86, 139, 248, 370, 391.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 83v-4, 172v.
 9. *Visitations* II, p 345.
 10. Linc. Reg., ff 84, 181v-2.
 11. LAO: Vj 2, f 29.
 12. Linc. Reg., ff 36-7v, 82v, 84-5, 125v-6, 172v, 182.
 13. *Ibid.*, ff 108v, 125, 182; LAO: A 2/33, f 29.

1440 (ctd)

September	30	Tattershall ¹
October	3	Lincoln ²
	5	Nettleham ³
	6	Bardney Abbey ⁴
	6	Nettleham and Sleaford ⁵
	7,8	Lincoln ⁶
	9	Nettleham
	12	Nocton Park Priory
	13	Blankney ⁷
	14	Kyme Priory ⁸
	16	Sleaford ⁹
	21	St Leonard's, St Michael's & Newstead Priors Stamford ¹⁰
	24,26	Lyddington ¹¹
	30,31	Buckden
November	2	Leicester
	6	Sleaford
	8,9,11	Lyddington ¹²
	21	Launde Priory
	22	Owston Abbey ¹³
	24	Bottesford
	26-7	Kirkby Bellars Priory
	28	Asfordby ¹⁴
December	1-4	Leicester, New College and Abbey ¹⁵
	11,12	Lincoln
	14	Sleaford ¹⁶
	15,19,21,28-30	Lyddington

1441

January	8	Lyddington
	11	Kibworth ¹⁷
	19	Breedon Priory
	20	Langley Priory

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 85, 125.
 2. LAO: Vj 2, ff 36v-7.
 3. Linc. Reg., f 82v.
 4. *Visitations* II, p 28.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 84v-5, 152.
 6. CPL, vol. IX, pp 159-64; LAO: Vj 2, f 37.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 85v-6, 182, 191v.
 8. *Visitations* II, p 168.
 9. Linc. Reg., f 86.
 10. *Visitations* II, pp 240, 346-7.
 11. CPL, vol. IX, pp 159-64; Linc. Reg., f 152.
 12. Linc. Reg., ff 124, 152, 172, 181v, 191v.
 13. *Visitations* II, pp 177, 264.
 14. *Ibid.*, p 164; Linc. Reg., ff 85, 152v, 172v.
 15. Linc. Reg., ff 152v, 172; *Visitations* II, pp 187, 206.
 16. Linc. Reg., ff 85v-6, 108v-9, 113.
 17. *Ibid.*, ff 84v-6, 113, 124v, 152v, 191v-2; PRO: C 85/112/6.

1441 (ctd)

January	21	Grace Dieu Priory
	22	Garendon [Abbey] ¹
February	8-10, 13, 15	Old Temple, London and Westminster ²
	19	Buckden
	27	Lyddington
March	1, 3, 4	London
	6, 7	Sleaford
	8	Nettleham
	9, 10	Lyddington
	11	Sleaford
	13	Nettleham
	15	Lincoln
	17, 18, 23	Nettleham ³
	27	Dorchester Abbey ⁴
	[28	London]
	28	'Waterlyng' [Watlington?]
	31	Buckden
April	1	'Byllesfield' [Bitchfield?]
	8	Huntingdon
	13	Lincoln
	14	Nettleham ⁵
	15	Lincoln ⁶
	17	London
	19	Nettleham
	22	Buckden ⁷
	24	Lincoln ⁸
	30	Lyddington
May	5, 13	London
	[15	Nettleham]
	17-19	London
	21-2, 28	Wooburn
June	1	Dorchester Abbey ⁹
	2, 6, 8-10, 13	Wooburn
	21	Sheen
	22, 26	Old Temple & London
	[26	Lyddington]
	29	Wooburn
July	8	Wooburn
	11, 13	Old Temple, London
	[15	Daventry]
	17, 20, 22	Buckden
	23	Old Temple, London
	28	Buckden

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1. *Visitations* II, pp 40, 119, 173; Linc. Reg., f 152v.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 125, 181v, 191v-2; PRO: E 28/66.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 35, 82v, 84v-6, 125, 144, 152v-3, 165v, 181v.
 4. *Visitations* II, p 68.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 36v, 76v, 86, 113, 173, 188v, 192.
 6. LAO: A 2/33, f 48v. Easter Day was 16 April.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 113, 173, 192.
 8. LAO: Vj 2, ff 37v-8. But he had been summoned to a council meeting at Westminster for 24 April (PRO: E 28/67).
 9. *Visitations* II, p 71.

1441 (ctd)

August	1-3, 9, 11, 16	Buckden
September	9	Nettleham
	9, 11	Nottingham
	14, 15, 18	Nettleham
	19	Lyddington
	19-21, 24, 26	Sleaford
	27	Lyddington
October	1, 3	Lyddington
	9	London ¹
	10	Ankerwyke Priory ²
	17, 20-1, 23, 27-8	Old Temple, London & Westminster ³
	30	Ankerwyke Priory ⁴
November	5	Osney ⁵
	6, 9-11, 13, 16, 27	Old Temple, London & Westminster ⁶
	27	Tattershall Castle
	30	Lyddington
December	4, 10	Lyddington
	11	Buckden
	13, 18, 21-2	Lyddington

1442

January	3, 5, 9, 11, 15, 17	Lyddington ⁷
	18	Newnham Priory ⁸
	28-9, 31	London ⁹
February	4, 7, 8, 10, 11	London & Old Temple
	[14	Lincoln]
	14	Beaconsfield
	15	Buckden
	15-17, 21-2	London
	23	Beaconsfield
	25	Wooburn
	27	London
March	1, 3, 5, 10, 13, 14	Old Temple & London
	17	Beaconsfield
	21-5	London
	29	Wooburn
April	14, 18	Nettleham ¹⁰

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 86, 89-90v, 126v-8, 153-4v, 179, 182; PRO: C 85/112/10-11.
 2. *Visitations II*, p 1.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 89, 126v, 154v; *The Brut*, vol. II, p 480; Davies, *Chronicle*, p 59.
 4. *Visitations II*, p 5.
 5. Linc. Reg., f 173v.
 6. *Ibid.*, ff 126v-7, 182v, 192; *The Brut*, vol. II, p 481; PRO: E 28/69/40-42.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 76-7, 86v, 126v-7, 153v, 173v-4, 183, 192.
 8. *Visitations II*, p 231.
 9. Parliament was at Westminster from 25 January until 27 March.
 10. Easter Day was 1 April.

April	19, 20, 23, 26	Old Temple & London ¹
May	7	Markyate Priory ²
	8	Northampton?
	10	Lyddington
	18, 19, 24-5	Sleaford
	29	Nettleham ³
	29	Lincoln ⁴
June	1, 2, 8, 12, 14, 16	Lincoln & Nettleham
	17	Sleaford
	19	St Leonard's Priory, Stamford ⁵
	19	St Michael's Priory, Stamford ⁶
	22	Pipewell ⁷
	23	Peterborough Abbey
	26	Fotheringhay College ⁸
	28	Titchmarsh ⁹
	29, 30	Irthlingborough College
July	1	Higham Ferrers College ¹⁰
	2, 3	Wellingborough
	6	Nettleham ¹¹
	7	St James Abbey, Northampton
	[11	St John's Hospital, Northampton]
	11	Hospital of St James & St John, Brackley
	12	Chacombe Priory
	13	Canons Ashby Priory
	15-17	Daventry Priory
	17	Catesby Priory
	22	Rothwell Priory
	23	Bulwick and Cottingham ¹²
	27-8, 31	Sleaford
August	1, 3, 4, 11	Sleaford ¹³
	16	Lincoln ¹⁴
	17	Nettleham

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 43, 76v, 86v-8, 113v, 129, 143v-4, 153v-5v, 167v, 173, 183, 188v, 192v. Convocation was at St Paul's from 16 - 26 April 1442.
 2. *Visitations* II, p 228.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 43, 87-8v, 113, 128v-9, 173.
 4. LAO: A 2/33, f 48.
 5. Linc. Reg., 42v, 87v-8v, 113, 128v, 155v.
 6. *Visitations* II, p 351.
 7. Linc. Reg., f 183.
 8. *Visitations* II, p 108, 283.
 9. Linc. Reg., ff 40, 128v.
 10. *Visitations* II, p 135, 154-64.
 11. Linc. Reg., ff 40, 42v, 88.
 12. *Visitations* II, pp 39, 43, 46, 53, 60-4, 244-7, 319, 401-3.
 13. *Ibid.*, p 401; Linc. Reg., ff 41v-2v, 88-9, 128v, 155v.
 14. LAO: A 2/33, f 64v.

1442 (ctd)

August	29, 31	Old Temple, London ¹
September	1, 2	Old Temple, London
	12	Wooburn
	15, 16	Oxford
	22, 27	Wooburn ²
October	3	Eltham ³
	6	London ⁴
	8-10	Eltham ⁵
	10, 11	Charlton ⁶
	12	Eltham
	13	Wooburn
	15	Charlton
	16, 17	Eltham
	28	London ⁷
November	7, 8, 12, 16, 22	Buckden ⁸
	20	Stonely Priory ⁹
	29	Ashwell
	30	Wymondley Priory
December	16	Lyddington
	17, 18	Northampton

1443

January	10, 11	Buckden
	14	Bletsoe ¹⁰
	16	Harrold Priory
	17	Turvey
	18	Newnham Priory ¹¹
	19	St John the Evangelist hospital, Leicester ¹²
	21	Elstow Abbey
	24	Dunstaple Priory ¹³
	24	Woburn Chapel
	28	Biggleswade ¹⁴

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 40, 155v; PRO: C 85/112/13-14.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 39v-40v, 88v.
 3. PRO: C 81/1545/86.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 130.
 5. *PPC*, vol. V, pp 210-3; Nettleham on 9th (Linc. Reg., f 88) cannot be Alnwick.
 6. Linc. Reg., f 110v - Charlton, south London, not as suggested in *Visitations II*, p xxxviii.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 39, 154v-5, 183; *PPC*, vol. V, p 218.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 38v-9, 155.
 9. *Visitations II*, p 359.
 10. Linc. Reg., ff 85, 129-30, 155, 173v.
 11. *Visitations II*, pp 130, 231.
 12. Linc. Reg., ff 40v, 174. See *Visitations II*, p xxxviii for the suggestion that the 19th is an error for St John the Baptist's hospital, Bedford.
 13. *Visitations II*, pp 83, 89.
 14. Linc. Reg., ff 38, 128v.

1443 (ctd)

January	29	Northill College ¹
February	1, 2	Buckden
	7, 8, 10	Lyddington
	12	Lincoln
	13, 15	Lyddington
	22	Sleaford
March	2, 8, 11, 17	Sleaford
	29, 30	Nettleham
April	6, 15, 19	Nettleham
	19	Lincoln
	23, 26, 28	Nettleham ²
	29	Lincoln ³
May	3	Lincoln
	3, 7, 9	Nettleham
	12	Benniworth
	13, 14, 16	Nettleham ⁴
	18, 20	Lincoln ⁵
	23-4, 31	Sleaford
June	3	Lyddington
	7, 13, 15, 17, 22-5, 27-8	Sleaford ⁶
July	3, 6, 8-10	Old Temple, London and Westminster ⁷
	13	Wooburn
	18, 24-6, 29	Lyddington
August	2	Lyddington
	3	Sewstern
	7	Lincoln
	9	Sewstern
	12, 13, 18	Nettleham
	23-4, 30, 31	Old Temple, London
September	1	London
	4	Buckden
	9, 13	Lyddington
	22	Sleaford
	24	Nettleham
October	28	Lyddington
	7	Lyddington
	10	Bedford ⁸
	13	Eton ⁹
	16, 17, 27-31	London & Westminster ¹⁰
	31	Buckden

1. *Visitations* II, p 247.

2. Linc. Reg., ff 37v-8, 40-1, 113v, 129-30v, 155-6v, 183. Easter Day was 21 April.

3. LAO: Vj 2, f 40v.

4. Linc. Reg., ff 37v, 92v-3, 130-1, 156, 174v.

5. *Ibid.*, f 92v; LAO: Vj 2, f 40v.

6. Linc. Reg., ff 37v, 91, 130v, 132, 135v-6, 156, 174v, 184.

7. *Ibid.*, ff 91v, 130, 132; *PPC*, vol. V, pp 299-300.

8. Linc. Reg., ff 51, 91v, 110v, 113v, 130-1v, 155v-7, 166, 183v-4.

9. *Register Thomas Bekynton*, vol. I, p 1.

10. Linc. Reg., ff 53v, 91v, 166, 175v, 183v-4; PRO: C 81/1545/90.

1443 (ctd)

November	2	Wooburn
	4, 8, 9, 13-15, 19, 21-2, 24-5	Old Temple & London
December	2	Buckden
	4, 5, 8, 9, 12, 21, 31	Lyddington

1444

January	1	Lyddington
	4-6	Amphill Castle
	9, 10, 13, 15, 16	Lyddington
	22	Sleaford
February	1, 2	Cambridge
	3	Huntingdon
	6-11	Sleaford
	17	Lyddington
	19	Nettleham
	19, 22, 24	Sleaford
	24-5, 27-9	Nettleham
March	2, 3	London
	4, 6	Nettleham
	7	Lyddington
	8-11, 19, 21, 23, 27, 30	Nettleham ¹
April	6, 9	Nettleham ²
	11	Lyddington
	16	Sleaford ³
	19-21, 23, 27-9	Nettleham ⁴
May	1	Lincoln
	2, 5, 6	Nettleham ⁵
	8	Bardney Abbey ⁶
	9	Lincoln
	13	London
	14	Wooburn
	14, 16	Sleaford
	16	Lincoln
	17-20, 22-3	Sleaford
	28	Lyddington
June	4	Lyddington
	10, 11	Buckden
	14, 15	Old Temple & London
	17	Banbury
	18, 20	Old Temple & London
	[26	Lincoln]
	28	Wooburn
	30	Old Temple

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 4-6, 47v, 49v-54, 92-4, 130-2, 156v-7, 165v-6v, 174v-6, 183v, 189.
 2. *Ibid.*, f 94; PRO: C 84/46/26.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 132, 185. Easter Day was 12 April.
 4. *Ibid.*, ff 54, 94, 132v, 158v, 174v; PRO: C 85/112/17. Northampton on 22nd (Linc. Reg., f 176) probably belongs to 1445.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 47-8v, 184.
 6. *Visitations* II, p 32.

1444 (ctd)

July	6	London
	15	Wooburn
	17	Lyddington
	20, 23, 29	Buckden
August	1, 6, 9	Buckden
	16, 18, 20-2	Wooburn
	28, 30, 31	Old Temple & London ¹
		Buckden ²
September	5, 6, 10, 12	Lyddington
	17, 21, 26	Buckden
October	1	Lyddington ³
	3	Nettleham
	13, 15, 16	Buckden ⁴
	[15	Sleaford
	16, 18	Buckden ⁴
	22	Old Temple & London ⁵
	24-25, 27, 29	Wooburn
		London
November	3	Buckden
	5	Sleaford
	12, 15, 16	Lyddington
	18	Lyddington
December	20-1, 23-4, 28	Sleaford
	1, 4, 15, 16, 20-1, 24	
	31	

1445

January	2, 3, 7-9	Sleaford
	15-17, 20-1, 23	Nettleham
	24	Lincoln
	25, 30	Nettleham
February	2, 7, 9	Nettleham
	13-15, 17	Sleaford ⁶
	18, 20	Lyddington ⁷
	24-5	Buckden
	26	Biggleswade ⁸
March	1-4, 6, 8-11	Old Temple, London and Westminster ⁹

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 44v-6, 60v-1, 93-4v, 96, 110v, 132, 135v, 157-8v, 167, 176v, 184-5, 189.
 2. *Ibid.*, ff 59v, 93, 132v, 158; PRO: C 85/112/18.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 132v, 158, 176v; PRO: C 85/112/19.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 58v-9, 93v, 96, 100, 111, 114, 132v-3, 158, 167. Convocation was at St Paul's from 19 - 26 October 1444.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 93, 111, 113, 184; PRO: C 85/112/20.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 55-7v, 59-62, 93, 96v, 114, 133, 157v-8, 167, 184, 193.
 7. *Ibid.*, f 57; Court book, p 99.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 167v, 185. Parliament was at Westminster from 25 February until 9 April 1446.
 9. *Ibid.*, ff 56, 58, 94v, 133v, 157v, 176, 184-5, 193; *CPL*, vol. X, pp 32-3. Sleaford on 11th (Linc. Reg., f 185) must be wrong.

1445 (ctd)

March	13	Beaconsfield ¹
	15	Wooburn
	20	Lyddington
	23-4	Sleaford
	30-1	Nettleham
April	31	Sleaford
	5	Sleaford
	9, 13, 17, 18, 20-1	Lyddington
	22	Northampton
May	6	Cambridge
	8	Buckden
	9	London
	17	Wooburn ²
	21	Goring Priory
	22-4	Dorchester Abbey ³
	24	Watlington ⁴
	26	Studley Priory
	28	Bicester Priory
	29-31	Godstow Priory
June	1	Lincoln College, Oxford ⁵
	1, 2	Osney ⁶
	2	Oriel College, Oxford
	3	St Frideswide's Priory Oxford
	4	Osney Abbey
	5	Eynsham Abbey ⁷
	7	Eynsham
	9	Brampton
	11	Woodstock
	16	Chetwode ⁸
	16	Wroxton Priory ⁹
	17	Banbury ¹⁰
	18	Northampton ¹¹
	19, 22-3	Lyddington ¹²
	27	Sleaford
	29	Nettleham
July	5	Nettleham
	12, 13, 16, 17	Sleaford
	19, 20, 24-5, 30-1	Lyddington
August	3, 5	Lyddington
	9	Buckden

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1. Court book, p 99. Easter Day was 28 March.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 17, 55, 62, 66v, 94v-5, 97v, 134, 157v, 159, 167v, 176, 189, 193v.
 3. *Ibid.*, f 144; *Visitations* II, pp 78, 117.
 4. Linc. Reg., f 95.
 5. *Visitations* II, pp 34, 113-15, 267, 361.
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 62v, 177v.
 7. *Visitations* II, pp 90, 262, 265, 268.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 159, 189, 193, 195.
 9. *Visitations* II, p 395.
 10. *Cartulary of Osney Abbey*, ed. H.E. Salter, vol. IV, pp 121-9.
 11. Linc. Reg., ff 133v-4.
 12. *Ibid.*, ff 95, 133v, 177v; PRO: C 85/112/23-24.

1445 (ctd)

August	16	Wooburn
	30	Old Temple
September	4	Buckden ¹
	16, 17	Nettleham ²
	21	Sleaford ³
	23	Lyddington ⁴
	30	Aylesbury
October	6, 8, 14, 15, 20, 23-4	Buckden
	29	London
November	2	Wooburn ⁵
	4, 5, 7, 8, 12, 15-17, 23	Old Temple, London and Westminster
December	2	Westminster ⁶
	15	Lyddington
	18, 19	Sleaford

1446

January	15	Lincoln
	16	Sleaford
	18	Lyddington
	28	Waltham Cross ⁷
	30	Old Temple, London
February	4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 16, 18, 19, 22-3, 26-7	Old Temple, London and Westminster
March	1, 3	London ⁸
	8, 9	Lyddington ⁹
	12, 15	Sleaford ¹⁰
	22, 24, 31	Nettleham
April	3, 5	Nettleham
	5	Bardney
	6-8, 11, 19, 22	Nettleham
May	1, 3	Nettleham
	3	Lincoln
	8, 9	Sleaford
	9	Buckden
	9	Cambridge
	11, 13, 17, 20, 24, 26	Sleaford
June	1, 3, 6, 10	Lyddington

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 63, 66-7, 95-6, 113v, 134, 143v-4, 159-60, 167v.
 2. *Ibid.*, f 185v; PRO: C 85/112/25.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 135, 160.
 4. PRO: C 85/112/26.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 30, 96, 134v-5, 159v, 185v. He was also summoned to a council meeting for 11 October (E 28/77/3).
 6. Linc. Reg., ff 30, 134v-5, 143v, 159v, 185v; PRO: C 81/1546/4; E 28/76/5.
 7. Linc. Reg., ff 96v, 100, 134v-5, 159v.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 97, 134, 144, 159v; PRO: C 81/1546/10. One date for Nettleham on 5 February (Linc. Reg., f 134).
 9. Linc. Reg., ff 97, 159.
 10. *Ibid.*, f 159; PRO: C 85/112/27. Easter Day was 17 April.

1446 (ctd)

June	11	Wooburn
	15, 22	London
July	2, 8	Old Temple & London ¹
	14, 15, 18	Wooburn
	21, 23, 25, 27, 30	Lyddington ²
August	6, 7	Lyddington ³
	12	Sleaford ⁴
	19	Lyddington
	31	Old Temple, London
September	6, 8	Buckden ⁵
	10	Peterborough Abbey ⁶
	12, 16, 19	Buckden
October	1-3	Buckden
	5	Peterborough
	6, 7, 22	Buckden ⁷
November	9, 11	Buckden
	26-8	Lyddington
December	9, 16, 17	Lyddington
	22, 30	Sleaford

1447

January	2, 3, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19, 26	Sleaford ^a
February	1, 6	Sleaford
	7	Peterborough
	14	Sleaford ^a
	19, 24, 28	Nettleham
March	2	Buckden
	4-6	Nettleham
	6	Cambridge
	[7	Stamford]
	12, 13	Cambridge
	16	Buckden
	18	Nettleham
	24	Lyddington
	25	Lincoln
	25, 31	Nettleham
April	5, 15	Nettleham
	15	Lincoln
	23	Sleaford

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1. Convocation at St Paul's from 22 June until 8 July 1446.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 97-9, 135v-7, 159-60, 164, 168, 177, 185v-6; Court book, pp 5-6, 41, 87.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 135v, 164; CUL: Peterborough Ms. 2, f 19.
 4. PRO: C 85/112/28.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 68, 135v, 164, 186.
 6. *Visitations* II, p 285.
 7. Convocation met at Lambeth in October 1446.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 69, 71-2v, 98, 110, 135-7, 160v, 164v, 176v-8, 186. He was summoned to a council meeting at Westminster on 24 January (PRO: E 28/77/15). It does not look as if he attended.
 9. Parliament was at Bury St Edmunds from 10 February until 3 March 1447. Easter Day was 9 April.

April	24	Nettleham
	26	Sleaford
	28	Sewstern
	29, 30	Lyddington
	May 2, 4	Lyddington
May	5	Buckden
	7-9	King's College, Cambridge and Cambridge
	11	Sleaford
	13	Buckden
	20	Lyddington
June	30	London
	1, 3, 5, 6, 9, 10, 14	Lyddington
	15	St Leonard's Priory, Stamford
	17	Sleaford
	23	Stamford ¹
July	23, 27, 28, 30	Lyddington
	2, 3, 5, 13, 14	Lyddington ²
	14, 15	Sleaford
	19, 28	Lyddington
	August 1, 5	Lyddington
August	7	Sleaford
	13, 14	Nettleham ³
	15	Nutley Abbey ⁴
	17	Sleaford
	22	Rothwell
September	30	London
	5	London
	7, 9	Buckden
	11, 12	Bluntisham
	12-14	Buckden
	[19	Bardney Abbey] ⁵
	20, 22-3	Buckden
	25	Sleaford
	26	Nettleham
	27	Lincoln
October	29	Nettleham
	2	Sleaford
	6	Ramsey
	7, 9, 11, 18, 26-30	Buckden
	November 12-14	Buckden
November	16	Lyddington
	21	Buckden
	25	Lincoln
	29, 30	Lyddington
December	1	Lyddington

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 67-8, 70-1, 101, 135-8v, 143v-4v, 160v-1v, 168, 176v-8v, 186, 194; Court book, p 90.
 2. *Ibid.*, ff 99, 137v, 161, 168, 194; PRO: C 85/112/32-36.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 71, 77, 99, 137v, 160v, 169, 178v, 189.
 4. *Visitations II*, p 253.
 5. *Visitations II*, p 34.

1447 (ctd)

December	1, 2	Sleaford
	5, 7	Lyddington
	7	Buckden
	12	Daventry
	16	Lyddington
	20-2, 26, 29	Sleaford ¹

1448

January	3, 7	Sleaford ²
	9	Lyddington
	10	Leighton Buzzard
	11	Wooburn
	17	Lyddington
	18, 20-2	Wooburn
	29	Lyddington
	29	Cambridge
	31	Huntingdon ³
February	2, 3, 7, 13	Sleaford ⁴
	20	Lincoln
	21, 23, 26	Nettleham
	26	Lincoln
	29	Sleaford
March	1	Nettleham
	13, 16	Lincoln ⁵
	16, 19	Nettleham
	23, 30	Lincoln ⁶
April	3, 4	Lincoln
	7	Nettleham
	12	London
	12	Stamford
	23	Lincoln
	24	Sleaford
	29	Nettleham
May	1	Old Temple, London
	5, 6	Sleaford
	13, 15	London
	18	Sleaford
	27	Lyddington
	30, 31	London
June	2, 5, 6, 11, 13	Old Temple & London
	19	Buckden
	21	Lyddington
	22, 26-7	Sleaford
	29	Lyddington

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 73-4v, 99-100v, 110, 137v-8v, 144v, 160v-1v, 168, 178v-9, 189v-90, 192v-4; Court book, pp 17, 18, 20-1, 90.
 2. PRO: C 84/47/5; Court book, p 22.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 74, 138, 161v-2, 168v, 178, 192v.
 4. *Ibid.*, ff 74, 138v, 161v; PRO: C 85/112/38.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 110, 138, 161v, 168v-9, 178v, 189, 194.
 6. *Ibid.*, f 194; CUL: Peterborough Ms. 2, f 24. Easter: 24 March.

1448 (ctd)

July	2, 6-8, 13, 15	Sleaford
	15, 18	London
	19	'Ketelby'
	[24	London]
	24	Nettleham
	26	Lincoln
	27	Sleaford
	30	Lyddington
August	1-5, 10, 12, 16	Lyddington
	22-3	Thame
	31	Old Temple, London
September	2	Old Temple, London
	7, 11	Lyddington
	13, 18, 21, 25	Buckden
	29	Lyddington
October	3-6	Lyddington
	13	Sleaford
	18-20	Lincoln
	30	Lyddington
November	2, 7, 13, 15	Nettleham
	16	Lincoln
	16, 23-4, 28	Nettleham
December	3	Lincoln
	5	Nettleham
	8-10, 14, 16-17, 19, 21-2	Sleaford

1449

January	8	Sleaford
	9	Kettering ¹
	17, 20	Wooburn ²
	20, 24	Buckden
	28	Lyddington ³
February	1, 5, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13	Sleaford ⁴
	13, 14	Lincoln
	14	'Glanfordbrygg' [Brigg?]
	16, 20,	Sleaford
	22	Nettleham
	24	Sleaford
	27	Nettleham
March	4	Lyddington
	7, 8, 12	Buckden ⁵
	14, 16	Old Temple & London ⁶

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1. Linc. Reg., ff 23-5v, 75v, 77, 102-4, 108-9v, 139-41v, 144v, 162, 169-70, 177v-80v, 186v-7, 189, 194v-5.
 2. PRO: C 84/47/10; Court book, p 105.
 3. Linc. Reg., ff 103, 141.
 4. *Ibid.*, ff 103, 109, 170v, 179v; PRO: C 85/112/39; Court book, p 100. Parliament was at Westminster from 12 February until 4 April 1449.
 5. Linc. Reg., ff 101v, 103-4, 109, 141, 162, 169; Court book, pp 101-2.
 6. *Ibid.*, f 104; PRO: C 85/112/40.

1449 (ctd)

March	[16	Nettleham]
	19	Lyddington
	21, 26	London
	29	Eton
April	4	Lyddington
	8	Sleaford
	10, 19	Lincoln ¹
April	23	Sleaford
	25	Lincoln
	27-8	Lyddington
May	3	Lyddington ²
May	3, 14, 15, 20, 22, 25, 28	London & Westminster ³
	31	Wooburn
June	9	Wooburn
	12, 15, 16	Old Temple & London ⁴
	21, 28-9	Winchester
July	2-4, 7	Winchester ⁵
	15	Wooburn ⁶
	15, 16, 22, 28	Old Temple, London ⁷
	31	Lyddington
August	2, 4-6, 8	Lyddington
	17	Lincoln
	21-2, 24-5	Lyddington
	29	Dunstaple
	31	London
September	1	London
	6, 7, 9	Wooburn
	10, 16	Old Temple, London ⁸
	16	Sheen ⁹
	17, 20, 24-5, 28	Lyddington
October	3, 5, 7, 9, 11, 22, 25, 29	Lyddington
November	2, 5	Lyddington
	19-21, 23, 27	Old Temple & London ¹⁰
December	2, 3	London ¹¹

William Alnwick died, presumably in London, on 5 December 1449.

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1. Easter Day was 13 April.
 2. Linc. Reg., ff 104-5v, 141-2v, 163, 170, 178, 188-9v, 194v-5.
 3. *Ibid.*, ff 105, 162v, 180; PRO: C 81/1546/36. Parliament was at Westminster from 7 until 30 May 1449.
 4. Linc. Reg., ff 105, 109v, 142-3, 180.
 5. *Ibid.*, ff 109v, 141v-2v, 188v; PRO: C 81/112/41. Parliament was at Winchester from 30 May until 16 June 1449. Convocation was at St Paul's from 1 - 28 July 1449.
 6. Linc. Reg., f 188v.
 7. *Ibid.*, f 105, 195; Court book, pp 78-9, 108; PRO: C 85/112/42.
 8. Linc. Reg., ff 24, 104v, 141v-3, 169v-70v, 180, 188v, 195.
 9. PRO: E 28/78/3.
 10. Parliament was at Blackfriars and Westminster from 6 November until 17 December 1449. Convocation was at St Paul's on 14 November.
 11. Linc. Reg., ff 104v-6, 142v-3v, 163, 167, 169v, 180v, 188, 190, 195; Court book, p 64.

APPENDIX VIII. WILLIAM ALNWICK'S BOOKS

The following extracts record the books that William Alnwick is known either to have owned or to have used or to have encountered in some other way.

1. Will of Stephen Scrope, Archdeacon of Richmond¹

Will made 24 August, proved 7 September 1418

'Item lego Magistro Willielmo Alnewyk j flatt peciam de auro cooperto, unum salsarium argenti et coopertum, cum armis meis in summo, j Librum Sextum, et j librum Constitutionum Othonis et Octoboni, cum Johanne Aton.

Item lego eidem Willielmo Decretales, Decreta, Arch' in Rosario, Hostiensem in Lectur',² ad terminum vitae suae. Et post ejus decessum volo quod dicta Decretales, Decreta, Hostiensis integre remaneant librariae ecclesiae beati Petri Ebor'.'

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1. *Testamenta Eboracensia*, vol. I, pp 385-9.
 2. This book is very possibly the same one that was left to Richard Scrope, the future archbishop of York and Stephen's uncle, by his uncle Geoffrey Scrope, canon of Lincoln in 1382 (*Lincoln Wills Registered in the District Probate Registry at Lincoln*, vol. I, A.D. 1271 to A.D. 1526, ed. C.W. Foster, Lincoln Record Society, vol. V, pp 11-16).

2. Heresy Trial of Master Robert Berte chaplain of Bury St Edmunds¹

On 2 March 1430, Master Robert Berte, chaplain of Bury, came before Bishop Alnwick charged with heresy mainly, it seems, because he had been in possession of the book Dives et Pauper

'Qui, per prefatum reverendum patrem tunc ibidem iudicialiter impetitus, dixit iudicialiter et recognovit quod ipse olim habuit quendam librum vocatum Dives et Pauper. Cui quidem Roberto dictus pater dixit quod ille liber continet in se plures errores et hereses quamplures.'

Berte was allowed to purge himself on 20 April 1430:

'Quibus sic peractis, quia prefatus reverendus pater asseruit se habere prefatum Robertum Berte de heresi vehementer suspectum, non obstante purgacione sua huiusmodi, pro eo quod ipse Robertus Berte tamdiu habuit secum dictum librum vocatum Dives et Pauper, in quo continentur multi errores et hereses quamplures, super quibus quidem erroribus et heresibus idem magister Robertus est multipliciter diffamatus in diocese Norwicensi, idem Robertus Berte iuravit iterum ad sacra evangelia predicta per ipsum tunc ibidem in iudicio corporaliter tacta quod ab hac hora in antea ipse nunquam tenebit nec affirmabit errorem nec errores, heresim nec hereses nec falsam doctrinam aut aliquam opinionem contra fidem Ecclesie et determinacionem sancte Romane Ecclesie'

In fact, *Dives et Pauper* was probably orthodox. Of particular interest is the fact that Abbot John Whethamstede paid for a copy of it to be made. Nevertheless, its form of debate perhaps left too much doubt as to what were the orthodox answers to some of the questions it raised.²

1. *Trials*, pp 98-102.

2. A. Hudson, 'The Examination of Lollards', p 145.

3. Will of Thomas Langley, Bishop of Durham¹

Will made at Durham, Friday 21 December 1436. Proved at Middleham, 17 December 1439.

'Item lego.. reverendissimo domino W. Episcopo Norwicenci librum meliorem vocatum Moralia Gregorii, magistro Roberto Rolston, custodi magnae garderobae domini Regis, alium librum vocatum Moralia Gregorii...'

4. Books borrowed from Garendon Abbey²

Bishop Alnwick was at the Cistercian abbey of Garendon on 22 January 1441,³ and it was probably at this time that the loan was made.

'Know all men by these presents that I William, bishop of Lincoln have had and have received as a loan, on the day of the composition of these presents, from John Londone, abbot of St. Mary of Garendon, of the county of Leicester, and the convent of the same place, [a volume of] Origen upon the first three books of the Pentateuch [and the book of] Judges, and somewhat upon the first [book of] the Kings, and some little upon the Song of songs, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel; and the volume begins on the second leaf [with the word... and on the] third, antur. And I bind myself, my executors and my attorneys, whosoever they be, to deliver back and restore this book or volume to the abbot and convent on the feast [of...next] to come, without further delay. In witness whereof my seal [is appended] to these presents.

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1. *Historiae Dunelmensis Scriptores Tres*, pp ccxli-ccxlvii.
 2. *Visitations* II, pp 112-3.
 3. See Appendix VII.

5. Books of Richard Harowden, abbot of Westminster¹

This petition, which bears Henry VI's initial, relates to the books of Richard Harowden, who had resigned as abbot of Westminster but had not yet died in January 1441

'Plese it to yow of zour noble grace to graunte unto your humble chappelleine William bisshop of Lincoln' of your gracious gifte certeyns books which by your commaundement he receyved of Ric' Harowden late Abbot of Westm', that is to say,

Compendium Morale Rogeri de Waltham 2^o. fo "Studia gloria"

Item Corpus Juris civilis 2^o. fo "effect' injuria est"

Item primam partem Bowyk 2^o. fo "hoc. est verum."

Item secundam partem Bowyk 2^o. fo. "ext."

And thereupon to directe zour gracious letters under zour privee seale in dewe fourme to the Tresorer of England and ye Chamberlayns of zour eschequer sufficient for yair discharge in yis behalfe and zour said suppliant shal pray for zow.'

Letters made at Westminster 27 January 19 Henry VI [1441]

6. Will of Sir William Estfield²

Will made 15 March, proved at Lambeth 21 June 1446.

'...executores.. dominum Willelmum Alnewyk Lincolniensis episcopum .. Et in casu quod absit aliqua questio vel discordia inter executores meos predictos super aliquo articulo in hoc testamento meo sive ultima voluntate mea content' et specificat' surrexerit vel mota fuerit pro defectu plane declaracionis alicujus claus', tunc volo ordino et requiro quod dicti executores mei in casu illo gubernati sint per discreccionem ordinancem et avisamentem domini Episcopi predicti et lego eidem domino Episcopo meum magnum portipherum et unum ciphum iuxta eleccionem suam de ciphis meis argentis deauratis superius non legatis...'

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1. PPC, vol. V, pp 140-1. This was not a bequest as claimed by Emden (BRUC, p 11).
 2. LPL: Register of Archbishop Stafford, 1443-52, ff 139-41.

7. Will of Henry Bennett, 1467/8'

This is perhaps the most interesting fragment of information and, perhaps, casts a light on the character of William Alnwick that his diocesan records do not reveal:

Will dated 7 February 1467-8, proved 23 March following

'To my cousin Master John Gygour, my boke of meditacions that was Alnweykes, Busshop of Lincoln'.

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1. 'Lincolnshire Wills proved in the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, 1471-90', pp 61-114, 179-218 in *Associated Architectural Societies' Reports and Papers*, vol. XLI (1932-3), p 179. I am most grateful to Dr. D.M. Owen for this reference.

APPENDIX IX

WILLIAM ALNWICK AS A WITNESS OF ROYAL CHARTERS

The following is a list of the dates of all the charters purporting to have been witnessed by William Alnwick. Some dates seem to accord well with his known itinerary and others would appear to be impossible. They are given here as a supplement to the itinerary, and as an indication of one area in which he continued to serve the crown for many years after he ceased to be at the centre of government. The source is in all cases PRO: Chancery: Charter rolls (C53).

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Reference</u>
20 May 1427	Westminster	C 53/187 m 48
14 July 1430	Westminster	
8 May 1438	Westminster	C 53/187 m 47
14 July 1438	Windsor Castle	C 53/187 m 46
21 July 1438	Windsor Castle	C 53/187 m 47
14 Nov 1438	London	C 53/187 m 45
26 April 1439	Windsor Castle	
28 April 1439	Westminster	
6 May 1439	Westminster	
19 May 1439	Kennington	C 53/187 m 44
4 Jan. 1440	Windsor Castle	C 53/187 m 42
6 Feb. 1440	Reading	
7 Feb. 1440	Reading	C 53/187 m 41
19 Feb. 1440	Reading	C 53/187 m 42
20 Feb. 1440	Reading	C 53/187 m 41
24 May 1440	Chertsey Abbey	
24 June 1440	Windsor Castle	
10 April 1441	Windsor Castle	C 53/187 m 39
4 Dec. 1441	Westminster	C 53/187 mm 15-13
13 Mar. 1442	Westminster	C 53/187 mm 27-25
20 May 1442	Westminster and Windsor Castle	C 53/187 mm 24-20
28 Aug. 1443	Westminster	C 53/188 m 44
19 Nov. 1443	Sheen	C 53/188 m 42
10 Dec. 1443	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 38-35
24 Dec. 1443	Westminster	C 53/188 m 41

<u>Date</u>	<u>Place</u>	<u>Reference</u>
6 Jan. 1444	Windsor Castle	C 53/188 m 41
2 Apr. 1444	Dover	C 53/188 m 35
11 June 1444	Westminster	C 53/188 m 39
4 July 1444	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 28-7
6 July 1444	Westminster	C 53/188 m 27
11 July 1444	Sheen	C 53/188 m 41
26 July 1444	Westminster	C 53/188 m 26
26 Oct. 1444	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 34-3
15 Dec. 1444	Westminster	C 53/188 m 31
7 June 1445	Westminster	C 53/188 m 32
7 July 1445	Westminster	C 53/188 m 42
29 July 1445	?	C 53/188 mm 25-24
3 Dec. 1445	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 22-19
15 Dec. 1445	Westminster	C 53/188 m 11
5 Feb. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 13-12
12 Feb. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 m 15
3 Mar. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 5-4
8 Mar. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 m 15
9 Mar. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 18-17
15 Mar. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 m 14
22 Mar. 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 m 11
21 May 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 7-6, 3-2
12 July 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 m 6
16 July 1446	Westminster	C 53/188 mm 10, 4
16 July 1446	Westminster	C 53/189 m 31
16 Nov. 1446	Westminster	C 53/189 m 35
18 Nov. 1446	Westminster	C 53/189 m 19
28 Nov. 1446	Westminster	C 53/189 m 34
3 Dec. 1446	Westminster	C 53/189 m 33
9 Dec. 1446	Westminster	C 53/189 m 35
5 Feb. 1447	Westminster	C 53/189 mm 27-6
24 Feb. 1447	Bury	C 53/189 m 24
10 May 1447	Westminster	C 53/189 m 20
19 May 1447	Westminster	C 53/189 m 33
22 May 1447	Westminster	C 53/189 m 25
28 June 1447	Farnham	C 53/189 m 24
8 Jan. 1448	Maidstone	C 53/189 mm 16-5

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